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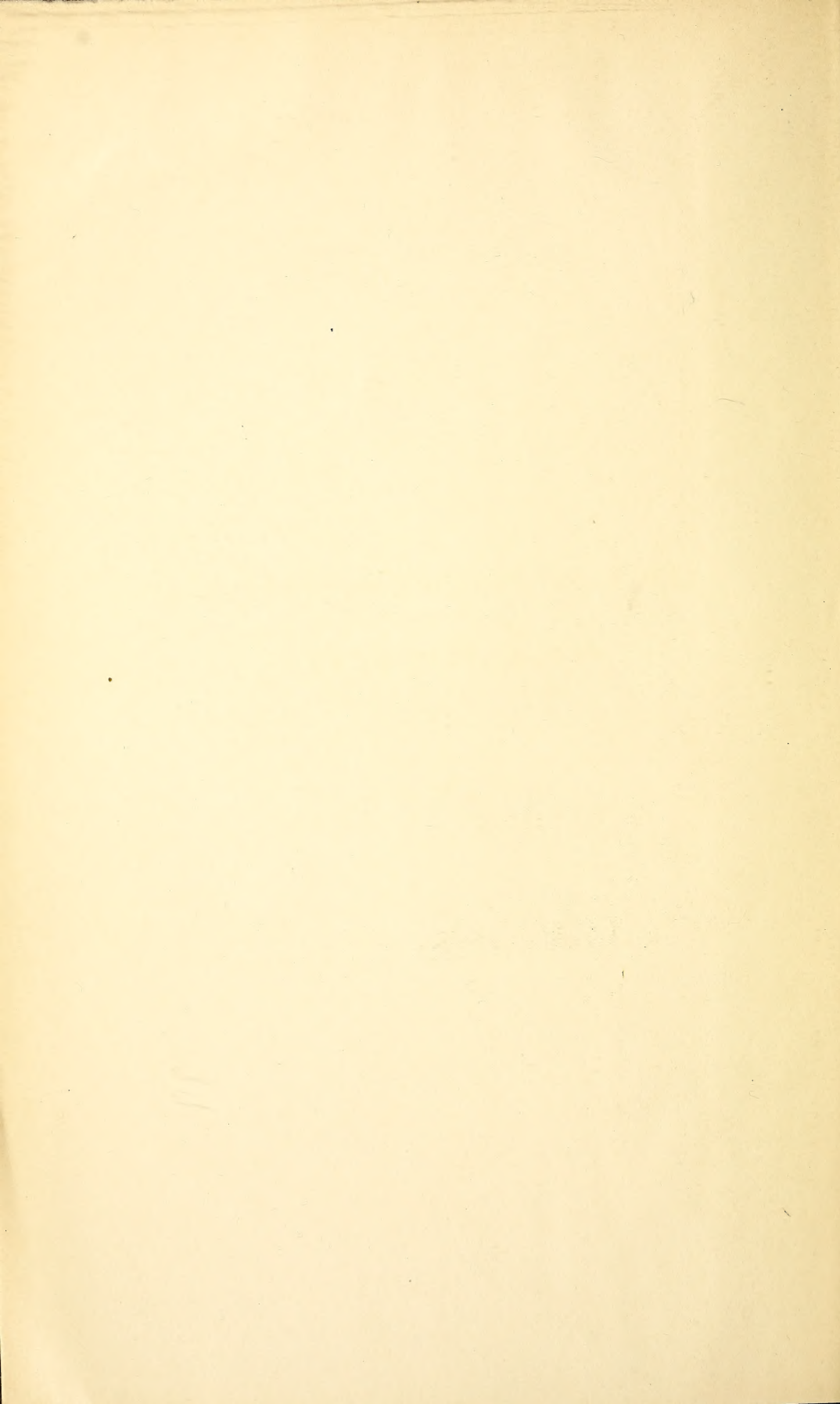
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NEW-YORK HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

PUBLICATION FUND.

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XX.

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EDWARD F. DE LANCEY,  
DANIEL PARISH, JR.,  
CHARLES ISHAM.



COLLECTIONS

OF THE

NEW-YORK HISTORICAL SOCIETY

FOR THE YEAR

1887.

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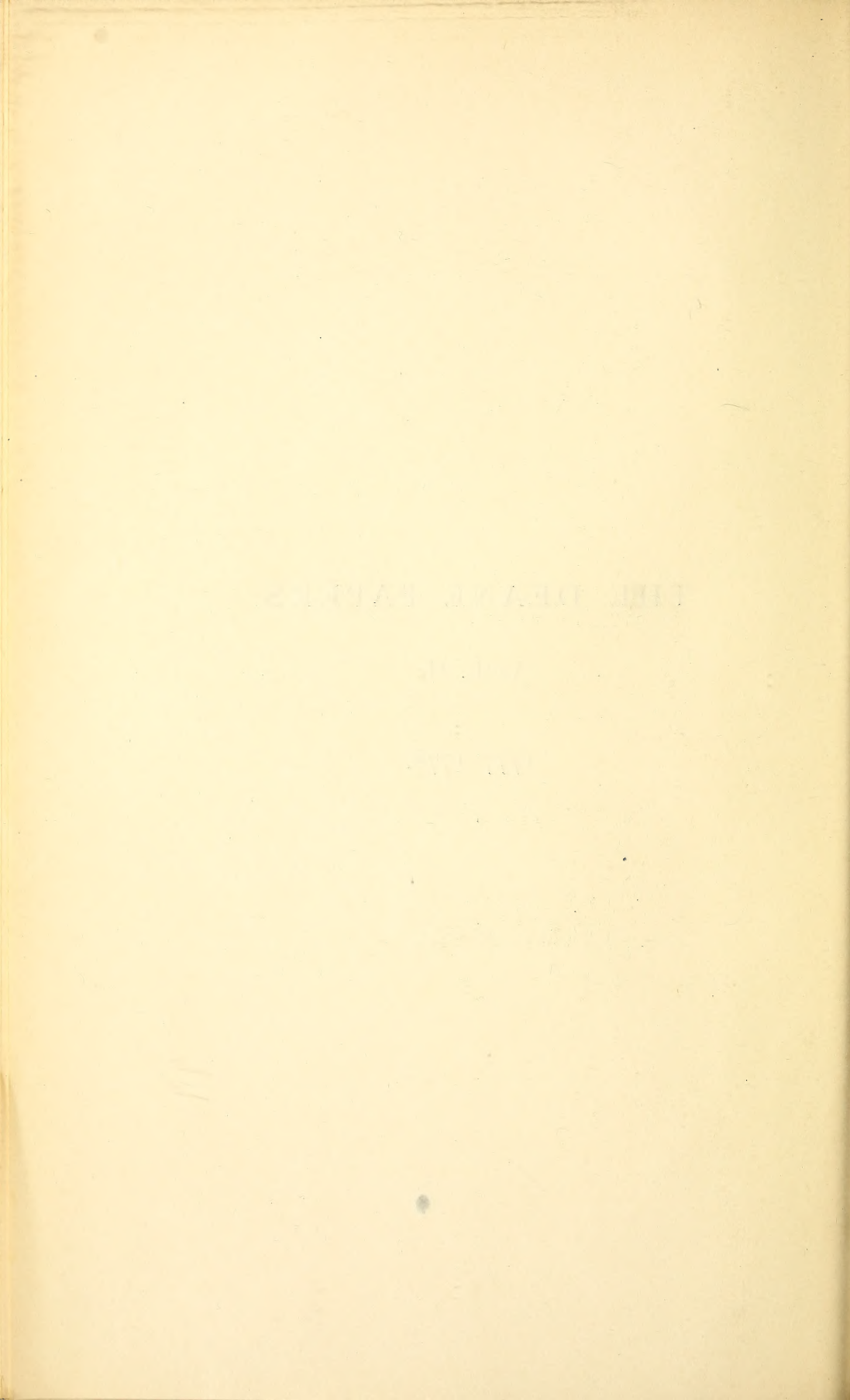




THE DEANE PAPERS.

VOL. II.

1777-1778.





## THE DEANE PAPERS.

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FROM JOSEPH REED.

Philad., Feb. 22, 1777.

DEAR SIR,—Mr. Morris having employed the Bearer who is a half Brother of mine to carry some Dispatches to France, I beg Leave to ask your Notice of him in that Way which will be consistent with your Station & his. He may want some Direction to preserve him from Folly & Expence during the little Time he will probably be near you. He has been bred a Merchant, & if at a small Expence he could acquire the Language so as to advance himself, I have directed him so to do at some Port or Country Town, where he can be upon the above Plan.

Any Attention paid him will ever be gratefully acknowledged by

Dr. Sir,

Your most obed. &  
very Hble Serv<sup>t</sup>,

JOS. REED.

The Hon. Silas Deane, Esq<sup>r</sup>., Paris.

*Thomas Mss.*

---

JOHN BAYARD TO NATHAN RUMSEY.

Phil<sup>a</sup>, Feb'y 27<sup>th</sup>, 1777.

DEAR SIR,—This serves to introduce to your acquaintance Mr John Reed, brother to Joseph Reed,

Esq<sup>r</sup>, Adjutant Gen<sup>l</sup> to the Continental Army, my particular Friend. The young Gentleman is going to France in order to Learn the Language & Customs of that Country, & at present has nothing farther in View. His Brother has furnish'd him with Cash, &c., but should He while there stand in need of any Supply, I will be greatly obliged to you to advance him to the Amount of Fifty pounds Sterling, w<sup>ch</sup>, upon being Inform'd of, I will take care to have Immediately remitted you, and any favor conferred on him by Way of Advice & direction I shall greatly acknowledge.

I wrote you a few days ago enclosing a Letter from your Family at Bohemia, conveying the disagreeable news of the Death of your Worthy Father. Should you on receipt thereof conclude to return, you will be so kind as to recommend M<sup>r</sup> Reed to the Notice of your Friend.

I Refer you to M<sup>r</sup> Reed for a particular acc<sup>t</sup> of the State of our Army, &c.; have only to observe that I have been so engaged in the Army & publick Business as to be unable to do any thing in Trade.

My Best respects to Self & M<sup>r</sup> Pennett, & remain,  
D<sup>r</sup> Sir, Yours Sincerely,

J<sup>N</sup><sup>o</sup>. BAYARD.

Addressed : To M<sup>r</sup> Nathan Rumsey,  
Merch<sup>t</sup> In Nantz.

M<sup>r</sup> Rumsey being sailed for America, I presented this Lett<sup>r</sup> to M<sup>r</sup> Deane, who paid me the sum of Fifty pounds St<sup>g</sup> on the Credit thereof (viz.),

Twenty Six pounds five Shill<sup>g</sup> pr. M<sup>r</sup> Williams, of Nantes, pr. Rec<sup>t</sup> I gave him, & Twenty Three pounds 15/ of M<sup>r</sup> Deane pr. order on M<sup>r</sup> Grand Banq<sup>r</sup> at Paris.

JOHN REED.

Sept. 5<sup>th</sup>, 1777.

*Thomas Mss.*



FROM EDWARD BANCROFT.

[London, February , 1777.]

DEAR SIR,—Yours of the 16<sup>th</sup> & 17<sup>th</sup> inst. have come safely to hand. In mine, by M<sup>r</sup> Holker, I mentioned a project contrived by Lord Temple to draw the Fellow called John the Painter into some Confession which might contribute to render the Americans & their Friends more odious in England, & the unmanly contrivance succeeded before any means to prevent it could be executed. He has declared to an Emissary of Lord Temple's, of the name of Baldwin, & one who has a Family in Philadelphia (a Painter by Trade), joined to an Emissary of Lord Sandwich's, that he did fire the Rope Yard at Portsmouth, &c., *at your instigation*, & the Calumny has already appeared in the News papers. The Fellow, while making this declaration, supposed himself talking to persons employed to assist him by the Minority here, & believed that by thus pretending to have acted in behalf and at the desire of an American Commissioner, he should secure the support of that party with ample Rewards, & even at this hour he does not know that he is betrayed. He is now in Winchester Gaol, & will shortly be put on his Tryal for burning the Rope House at Portsmouth. Those who are inimical to America readily swallow this declaration, & exclaim, as might be expected, against those concerned in the affair. The minority, however, think the Conduct of the man has been that of an enthusiastic Lunatic; they can not believe that a man would have been employed in a business of this nature without being furnished with money sufficient to execute it; nor that, after having actually fired the Rope House, he would, instead of applying for his reward, have continued here strolling about the Kingdom & breaking open houses for the means even of subsistence whilst attempting other mischiefs. These and other arguments which deserve attention I have enforced upon all my acquaintance with success, and if the ministerial writers should



enlarge on the subject, I shall carry them into the News Papers; but unless the matter should be more agitated I think it would not be advisable to take much publick notice of it. The Ministry at first gave out that the Fellow had Charged D<sup>r</sup> Franklin with having joined in Employing him; but it being afterwards objected to them that D<sup>r</sup> F. was not in Europe until after the transaction, his name has since been left out. The Fellow has farther said that he came over from France last Autumn under the name of Aitkin; that he applied to me by your order, &c., & that I would give him no Countenance or Encouragement, a Circumstance which contributes to my safety, and which, from the oddity of it, must render the other parts of his story less credible. By the inclosed Papers you will perceive that the affairs in America have of late had a most favourable change. I have seen a pretty many Letters from New York, & among others two long ones from Gov<sup>r</sup> Wentworth. I am persuaded from them that our affairs were in a *very* bad way about the middle of Dec<sup>r</sup>. Gates & Arnold with 3000 men had arrived at Peek's Kill about the last of Nov<sup>r</sup>; they afterwards found means to join Washington, & with him took the three Hessian Regiments (each according to the treaty consisting of 650 men). These troops certainly made little or no resistance, and Gen<sup>l</sup> Howe and the Ministry here are very much afraid of a General Defection of all the Foreign troops. The Levies which before went on slowly, or rather not at all, were after this success prodigiously accelerated. Attacks and Skirmishes every day took place in one quarter or another, and always terminated with advantage to the Americans. Capt. Misnard, in the Caroline Transport, left New York on the 18 of Jan'y. About 8000 Americans, under the Command of Gen<sup>ls</sup> Heath, Parsons, Scott, M<sup>c</sup>Dougal, &c., had taken Possession of the Lines at Kings Bridge. Almost all the King's Troops were collected at Brunswick, & Washington, with about 18,000 men, had nearly surrounded them, Leaving them no other retreat but by Amboy & Staten

Island to New York. Most of the American soldiers had returned & reinlisted, & it was supposed that notwithstanding the Severity of the Season, 40,000 Colonists were in arms at different places, & it was believed at New York that all the Troops were coming from Rhode island for the preservation of New York. Lord Howe had been ill of a Bilious Dysentery, but was recovering. This state of things in America, joined to appearances in Europe, have very much depressed the Spirits of Administration here, and the Stocks are beginning to sink, so that if France should act as if she *intends a war*, they will soon fall 8 or 10 pr. Cent., & the ministry will be obliged to get their new Loan of six millions under the most disadvantageous & embarrassing Circumstances. If there be an English ship of war sunk, as you mention, by a French one, it must have been the Pomona Sloop, which has been some time missing. The Prizes which Capt. Weeks has lately Carried into L'Orient, & particularly the Lisbon Packet, are the subject of much conversation, & Probably will be a Subject of Complaint from Havre. France, too, will probably Complain of some ill treatment given lately at Dover to the Ambassador's Courier. I am to meet y<sup>r</sup> Friend the Marquis to morrow. About 1500 Troops are preparing to embark at Clyde, Glasgow, & other places in Scotland. At Guernsey there are 4 Companies of invalids, making 208 men. At Jersey 4 Companies, making 348. Other particulars you will receive in a day or two pr. M<sup>r</sup> Hood with answers to your other Queries. The Horse shall be immediately bought. I am much obliged by y<sup>r</sup> kind Sollicitude for my safety, & am putting my affairs as fast as possible into a Situation to be left. I have another obliging Letter from 33 [Carmichael], to which I shall reply by M<sup>r</sup> Hood. What you hint of a causeless distrust of our great & good Friend gives me much uneasiness. Ever since his accidental meeting with the Duke de Choiseul was reported here with many Lying particulars by young Elliot, Lord Stormont has been directed to excite if possible a jealousy in the French Gov<sup>t</sup>



of his having improper connections with that Party in France, & though from my knowledge of his wisdom, I am convinced he never has given occasion for it, yet perhaps these contrivance may in some degree have succeeded, perhaps to his usual caution and reserve.

Endorsed, Doct. Bancroft.

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO EDWARD BANCROFT.

D<sup>R</sup> SIR,\*—You tell me that the story of James Aitkin, alias John the painter, who was executed at Portsmouth, for having set fire to the Stores there, supposedly by my Orders, or at least my instigation, has prejudiced, and still prejudices, many worthy, and respectable persons against me, they regarding me equally criminal with the actor, & suffer[er] in that Transaction. Those who form such a Judgment, must, I presume, take it for granted, that the s<sup>d</sup> James, or John, was my Agent, and acted by my directions and Orders, and that I was at the Time a liege subject of Great Brittain, & amenable to its Laws. This being the case there can be no doubt, but that I must have been more criminal, than even John himself was justly deemed to be on his Tryal. But supposing me to be the liege subject, not of Great Brittain, but of a foreign independant Nation, at the Time at War with Great Brittain, and that imagining that I had found a favorable opportunity, & met with a proper Agent to destroy, at one blow, the Fleet & armaments preparing to carry, and to spread devastation, and bloodshed in my Country, and that I improved the favorable moment, and attempted through this agency, to effect this great object; on this view of the case I am confident that every one of common sense & impartiality must acquit me, nay more though they rejoice at the defeat of the enterprize they must approve of the motives, which influenced me to engage

\* This letter to Dr. Bancroft, undated, unaddressed, and fragmentary, partially explains Deane's relations with Aitken.



in it, motives no less than a desire to weaken a declared Enemy, and to preserve my Country, by every means in my power, from the horrors, and distress of Fire and desolation. It is well known, that at the time of this Transaction I was not a subject of Great Britain, but of the United States, with whom the former was at War; That I was then acting on behalf of the supreme Authority of my Country, & was by their delegates, commissioned to procure for them, assistance from France, or from any other power in Europe, and instructed to do every thing in my power, to defeat the designs of Great Britain against them; if it was not criminal, or base in our Generals and Soldiers in America, to endeavor to defeat, and destroy the Forces sent out against them, it most surely could not be deemed such in me, or in any other, to attempt to prevent if possible, the going out of those Forces; if it was a noble, and most honorable Action in L<sup>d</sup> Rodney to defeat the Count D<sup>e</sup> Grasse, would not the Man who at equal hazard of his Life, had set fire to the Count's Squadron in Brest, & thereby have equally defeated his expedition, been entitled (at least in the Court of Common sense) to the same Honors? humanity must give him still greater, as thereby the destruction of Thousands of the human Race would have been prevented; confident therefore, as I am, that supposing even that I laid the plan on which John proceeded, & that I gave him his directions, and aided & assisted in the execution, yet I shall stand acquitted at the Bar of common sense & Common reason, and be further justified by the universal practise, of all Nations in every Age, when in similar Circumstances, I have no objections to comply with your request, and to give you without reserve the history of that Transaction, nor have I any to your communicating the Contents of this Letter to your Friends and acquaintance, who, from our known intimacy, may wish, on your account rather than on mine, to know the true state of that hitherto mysterious Transaction. As it

can afford no pleasure to either of us to review the transactions, from the fatal commencement of the late contest to their period, & as you & every one know the character & part which I acted in France from 1776 to 1778, I will enter without farther preamble, on the Narration of every Circumstance relative to the proceedings & History of this most extraordinary and enthusiastic adventurer, so far as they have come to my knowledge directly, or from unquestionable Authority.

In October, 1776, I lodged in the Hotel D'Entragues, rue de L'Universite, in the faubourgs de St. Germain. Though I had at that time the whole of the first floor, which consisted of an extensive suite of Rooms, yet I had but one servant. He spoke several Languages, and in particular the English, with more than common ease for a frenchman, or any other foreigner of his rank & station; this rendered him of particular service to me on many occasions. From his attendance on me at Versailles & elsewhere, & from a variety of other Circumstances, he had made up his opinion that I was a person of consequence, in opposition to Great Britain, & acting, tho' rather incog., a capital part against this Nation; from this he easily bro't himself to regard me as an Enemy to every English subject, & every one of them are inimical to me. This excited his watchfulness, & even his suspicion of every one who called to see me. One Morning he told me that a person of an odd & suspicious look & appearance had twice before called to speak with me, and although I had never given him Orders to deny me to any one, yet he had ventured to do it from his own apprehensions & without consulting me on the subject, and that the same person was now in the Anti Chambre, and peremptorily insisted on seeing me, knowing, as he said, that I was at home; on this I blamed him for having denied me without any directions, & bade him let the Man come in. But (said the honest fellow) you never saw a worse looking fellow in your Life. I am sure he can have no Business with your honor, unless it be to beg some-



thing, or to do what is worse, which, indeed, I suspect, for he speaks English so strangely that I can hardly understand him, and I think if he was honest he would speak plain. But I will show him in. Pray, Sir, don't go into another Room with him; stay in this, & then I shall be within hearing if anything happen. This extraordinary conduct & discourse of my Servant led me to expect something very singular & striking in the person about to be introduced—a Giant, or something not much inferior; but on opening the Door there sneaked in a diminutive looking Man of about 25 by appearance, of near the middle size for height, but thin, his Countenance rather wild, and at the same time somewhat expressive, his hair deeply inclined to the Red, & his Face covered with red Freckles; his dress no way recommended him at Paris, nor would in the lower stations of Life prejudice him any where; so far as the Eye could examine, it was whole & warm, but he had on a Surtout of a brownish Colour rather inclining to the Claret, which hid his under Cloaths; his hair hung loose on his shoulders, & down his neck before. The embarrassment under which he most necessarily labored on coming on such an Errand or Business to one to whom he was a perfect Stranger, having no one to introduce him or his subject, necessarily increased it, and it was some Moments before he could tell me that he had made bold to call on me on an affair of a secret nature, and of very great importance to me and my Country, and that he wished we might retire into a more secret apartment, for, said he, I suspect your Valet de Chambre, who is but in the next Room, may overhear what passes, & I have a bad opinion of him, for he has twice refused me an audience, though I knew that you was at home, under pretence that you was not; and besides, I would not on any acct have him or any other come to the knowledge of one syllable of what passes between you and me. His speaking this in broad Scotch at once excited my surprize & expectation; I told him there was no



necessity for our retiring into another Room, and that he might enter on the subject of his Visit without farther preamble, for that I wished him to be as brief as possible, looking at the same time at my watch, which seeing me dressed, he took, as I meant it, a hint that I was going out, and proceeded in a faltering and tremulous tone: I ask your honors pardon; I will only make bold, if your honor has leisure, to ask two or three Questions, and will call at another time, when you may be more at Leisure, on the principal object which I have in view. Pray, Sir, what news have you from America, & how are the affairs of the Congress & Genl Washington? Very good; they never were in a better way; but, in my turn, what induces you to enquire? You are not an American by your dialect, & I presume that you have never been there. It is true that I am not an American by Birth, but I have been there and wish well to the Country. Pray, Sir, if a Man is ill used, has he not a right to resent it and to seek revenge or retaliation on those who have injured him? This is a droll question for you to trouble me with; go into the Fields and tread on the meanest insect & see if it do not at least try to turn upon you, and if it be a serpent he will sting you & effectually revenge himself; this is the Voice the Law of Nature extending thro' all her Animal Creation. Right, Right, exclaimed he, his eyes sparkling & wild. Your honor has cleared up every doubt in my Mind; I have been most grossly injured, and I will be most signally revenged. Pray tell me if the Congress will give rewards and honors to those who serve them Voluntarily, but effectually; have you any Authority to promise any such? I know not nor can I conceive what you can be aiming at by this strange discourse. Congress will most unquestionably reward all those who render them essential service, whither in their immediate employ or not. But I have not any time to loose, and therefore come at once to the point—the object of your calling on me. Why, why, indeed, Sir, indeed, I wish your

honor was now at Leisure ; but I will call another morning. I was in America at the beginning of these disputes, and I foolishly took the part of Gov<sup>t</sup>. I was very, very harshly used for it by the people, on which I went & joined Lord Dunmore, who made me fair promises, but treated me worse than the Americans had done ; this opened my Eyes and shewed me that the Americans were right, & that they fought for Liberty, but I could not join them in that Country after what had passed, so I came to England, where I am resolved to serve them and their cause most effectually, and though I may appear to your honor a very weak and insignificant creature, yet if you will give me another audience I will shew you from the intelligence which I can give you that I can strike a blow, ay, such a Blow, his eyes rolling wildly, as will need no repetition. I have lately travelled thro' England, have been in all the principal ports, and can give you at least some intelligence of importance to you. Struck with the singularity of this rencontre, and wishing to know more fully what the Man aimed at, for, tho' in his looks he appeared wild, his conversation shew'd plainly that his mind laboured with some purpose or project more than common which shook his whole Frame, I wished from curiosity, more than from any other motive, to know more of the Man and something of his Views, of which he had as yet disclosed nothing ; after some farther incoherent conversation, or rather expressions, of his, in which he disclosed nothing of his design farther than that he was resolved on being revenged, and that in no common or ordinary way, and professing his esteem & zeal for the American Cause, I dismissed him, with leave to see me the next morning at the same hour, and my serv<sup>t</sup>, who apprehended an Assassin in the poor fellow, was much surprised to find the interview end so peaceably, but more so that a second was appointed. [Remainder missing.]

*Thomas Mss.*



## TO CARON DE BEAUMARCHAIS.

Paris, Feb'y 24<sup>th</sup>, 1777.

SIR,—I have been for some time past very apprehensive of the risque in sending Shipp's direct to the Continent of America at so late a Season and with such valuable Cargoes; they must, if they go direct, arrive on the Coast of America in the midst of the Cruising season of the Enemy's Shipp's, & as the ship Theresa has on board between sixty & seventy thousand Livres of Goods, purchased by the Commissioners jointly, independant of the Cargo furnished by you, I have consulted my Colleagues on the subject and laid before them your proposal of sending her by the West Indies. They are fully with me in opinion that it will be the safest, & best way, and as the season is so far advanced, & as this Rout will take a much longer time for the Goods to arrive on the Continent, they join me in urging that the utmost Dispatch may be made.

I have the honor to be, with great Respect,

Sir, your most Obed<sup>t</sup>,  
and very hum<sup>e</sup> Serv<sup>t</sup>.

SILAS DEANE.

P. S. With respect to the Amelia you have my opinion express'd in the above.

Mons<sup>r</sup> Beaumarchais.

*Thomas Mss.*

## FROM ROBERT MORRIS.

Philad<sup>a</sup>, Feb'y 27<sup>th</sup>, 1777.

DEAR SIR,—The letter enclosed herein was sent to me by our mutual Friend, Ned Rutledge, requesting me to transmit it to Europe and he desires me to mention the young Gent<sup>n</sup> to whom it is directed particularly to you as a Gent<sup>n</sup> of Family & Fortune deserving of great attention. He wishes you & the other Ambassadors to notice him as an American, that is one day or



other to make a Figure in these United States. I am sure nothing more need be said on this subject,

by D<sup>r</sup> Sir  
your Obed<sup>t</sup> hble Serv<sup>t</sup>,  
ROB<sup>t</sup>. MORRIS.

The  
Honble Silas Deane, Esq<sup>r</sup>.

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO THE SECRET COMMITTEE OF CONGRESS.

Paris, 27th February, 1777.

GENTLEMEN,—This will be delivered you by Captain Goy, who, with his lieutenant and two sergeants, embarks with thirty field pieces, ten ton of powder, ball, lead, &c, which I wish safe and in season for service, though delayed beyond my expectations. Captain Goy has the best of recommendations from officers of distinction here, and I am confident will be found to be of great service in the artillery, a part of which he accompanies. Dr. Franklin is at present in the country in good health, and we shall jointly write you very particularly in a few days ; meantime we are without any intelligence from Congress since he left Philadelphia, in October last. I will not attempt to give you an idea of the difficulties, which are the consequence of our being left thus without intelligence, nor the anxiety it occasions in our minds ; but must urge you to take some effectual measures for keeping up a correspondence with us in future, without which many proposals of the utmost importance to the United States are extremely embarrassed, and in danger of failing.

I have the honor to be,

With the most profound respect, &c.,  
SILAS DEANE.

*Diplomatic Correspondence, Amer. Rev., I., 103.*

FROM ROBERT MORRIS.

Philadelphia, Feb'y 27<sup>th</sup>, 1777.SILAS DEANE, ESQ<sup>R</sup>.

DEAR SIR,—You will receive, herewith, Copy of a letter I wrote you the 11<sup>th</sup> Jan'y on Commercial Matters, also Copy of one dated 31<sup>st</sup> Jan'y, respecting my B<sup>r</sup> [brother]; the Contents of both are hereby confirmed, and I am sorry it is not in my power to own rec<sup>t</sup> of any fresh letters from you or him. The state of suspense I am left in makes me very uneasy especially on his Account; however, I must wait with patience to have my doubts cleared up, and hope it will be done more to my satisfaction than my present fears suggest.

I have not received any Goods from you or him, neither have I heard of any being sent by you either for this place or the West Indies; if you have from any cause that I am unacquainted with, neglected doing it, you may have leisure to repent hereafter that you missed so fine an opportunity of making a Fortune. The prices of all imported articles have been enormously high. I cou'd have sold any quantity of European Manufactures for 500 to 700 pr C<sup>t</sup> and bo<sup>t</sup> Tobacco for 25/ to 30/ pr C<sup>t</sup>; it is not yet too late but Goods are becoming rather more plenty & Tobacco is rising, but there is plenty of room to make as much money as you please, and if Insurance cou'd be obtained in Europe it might be reduced to a Certainty even if you gave a prem. of 50 pr C<sup>t</sup> w<sup>h</sup>, however, is vastly too high. I think some good hand might be found to go over to London and manage such Insurances there; they love high Premiums and will Insure any thing for money, but this wou'd really be to their advantage, as I don't think we have lost above one fourth or at most, one third of our inward bound Vessells. I am sorry to inform you that there are now two or three British Men of War in Chesapeak Bay; they have taken the Ship Farmer, Cap<sup>t</sup> Dashiell, which had on b<sup>d</sup> 500 hhds of Tobacco on the public account & 50 hhds on my account; was



bound for Nantes, Consigned to Mess<sup>rs</sup> Pliarne Penet & C<sup>o</sup>. They have for the present, blocked up several others there, but we shall get them away by & by ; some ships have lately got away from hence and we shall keep waiting all opportunities of pushing Remittances to you. I do not like to enumerate the different Concerns going forward, because it opens our designs to the Enemy, shou'd the letters unfortunately fall into their Hands.

At present I will not enlarge, but in hopes of hearing from you soon remain, D<sup>r</sup> Sir,

Your affectionate Friend & Servant,

ROBT. MORRIS.

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*Thomas Mss.*

FROM EDWARD BANCROFT.

London, 28 February, 1777.

In my last which Mr. Holker handed to you, I spoke of Lord Temple's design of trying to make the man called John the Painter confess something in order to make the Americans and their friends more disliked here. He declared to a servant of Lord Temple who bears the same name as that lord, and to an emissary of Lord Sandwich, that he had set fire to the rope-yard at Portsmouth, &c., at your instigation, and this calumny has already appeared in the newspapers. This man in making his declaration believed he was speaking to persons charged to assist him by the minority, and pretended, by this false assertion, to have acted in favour, and at the desire of, an American agent, and to derive a good reward therefrom, and even at this moment he is still not undeceived ; he is at present in Winchester gaol and is shortly to be tried for incendiarism at Portsmouth. The enemies of the Americans are delighted at that declaration, credit it, and exclaim against those who took part in it. The minority, in spite of the Conduct of this mad enthusiast, cannot believe that a man can have been employed in an affair



of that nature without having received sufficient money to execute it, and say it is not probable that this man after having set fire to the rope-yard at Portsmouth, instead of seeking to draw his reward for it, would have amused himself in tramping the country, and begged alms so to speak, in order to live. The ministry said at first, that this man accused Dr. Franklin of being one of those who employed him but as it was objected that Dr. Franklin was not in Europe at that time, they have since left his name out. This man said, moreover, that he had come last autumn from France under the name of Aitkin, that he had come to my house by your order, &c., and that I had refused to assist him, a circumstance which contributes to my safety and which should throw discredit upon the whole story.

You will have seen by the newspapers that affairs have much changed their aspect in America. It appears that the Hessians did not defend themselves. The ministry and even General Howe fear a general mutiny of all the foreign troops. Several letters which I have seen say that our recruits, who only enrolled themselves very slowly before these last successes, come to us now from every side. Almost daily there are attacks or skirmishes in the different positions of the army, and almost always to the advantage of the Americans. Eight thousand Americans have taken possession of the lines at Kingsbridge. Almost all the troops are collected at Brunswick, and Washington has them nearly surrounded with 18,000 men, leaving them no other retreat to New York except by Amboy and Staten Island. The greater part of the American soldiers have returned and enrolled themselves, and it is thought that in spite of the severity of the season, there are at present 40,000 Colonists under arms in different places. At New York it is firmly believed that the troops which are at Rhode Island will cross to New York to defend it. Lord Howe has been troubled with a dysentery, but he is recovering. The

state of matters in America in conjunction with the appearances in Europe has prodigiously depressed the spirits of the administration here, and the funds begin to fall, so that if France acts as she intends to do, that is to say, to make war, they will fall 8 to 10 per cent., and the ministry will be obliged to raise a loan of six millions under very embarrassing and burdensome conditions.

The prizes lately taken by Captain Weeks form the subject of every conversation here. The ministry will certainly complain to the Court of France, but the latter has also to complain of the insults offered lately at Dover to the courier of the French ambassador.

What you tell me about the distrust of our great and good friend distresses me. His chance meeting with the Duke de Choiseul has been related here by young Elliot with many falsehoods. Lord Stormont has been charged if possible to excite the ministry of Versailles to jealousy and to intimate to it that our friend has some connections with that party in France; but I know he is too wise and prudent to have given ground for that suspicion. However, that attempt may have succeeded up to a certain point; perhaps also his reserved and prudent conduct may have been sufficiently —— to favour it. But if that or any other similar cause of distrust existed, I should regard it as an alarming circumstance and worthy of the utmost attention.

I learn from Halifax that of about 20 vessels which last left for Quebec, not one arrived there; the most part having been taken by our cruisers or obliged to take refuge in Halifax. The inhabitants of New England joined with some of Nova Scotia had possessed themselves of Fort Cumberland, but have been obliged to retire at the approach of several frigates. But that presupposes they will attempt the enterprise anew in the spring.

*Stevens's Facsimiles, No. 646.*



## TO THE SECRET COMMITTEE OF CONGRESS.

Paris, March, 1777.

GENTLEMEN,—I have received no letters since those by Dr. Franklin, dated in October last ; but, hourly hoping that some intelligence would arrive, have put off sending express for some time, until despairing almost of letters, we have agreed to despatch Capt. Hynson in a cutter as a packet.

It is now twelve months since I left Philadelphia, in all which time I have received but three letters. I refer you to our joint letter for an account of the perplexing and embarrassing situation this want of seasonable intelligence has thrown us into, as well as other political matters, and confine myself to commercial.

On my arrival at Bourdeaux in June last, I found there were no other vessels there except a brigantine from Portsmouth, and two small sloops, one from New York and the other from Rhode Island. The Merchants at Bourdeaux had begun to turn their attention to news from America and to think of its commerce ; but none had adventured their own property in it. The prevailing opinion at that time throughout Europe was that the Colonies would inevitably be brought to submission to any terms Great Britain should prescribe. The news arriving of the evacuation of Canada, which by English emissaries and partisans was exaggerated and stiled a decisive victory ; the prodigious armaments by sea and land destined for America, with the hostile resolutions of Parliament, and the credit of the British Administration in point of raising supplies, confirmed this opinion. A Scotch Junto at Bourdeaux, at that time spirited up by Jenkinson and Stanley, who visited all the principal trading towns in France at that season for the same purpose, represented American affairs in such a light that during the whole three weeks I spent there I found not a single person desirous of adventuring in that trade, though generally well wishers to the cause. Mr. Delap, indeed, constantly offered me every service in



his power, and to advance me either money or credit; but then I had to consider the smallness of the sum I brought over with me, a capital part of which I was finally disappointed of by the protesting of the Bills; that though it was then near five months since preparations had been made for remitting, yet that nothing had arrived; that when I left Philadelphia I had every reason to conclude that the full sum of forty thousand pounds sterling would be lodged in Europe by nearly the time of my arrival. These considerations distressed me exceedingly. To delay purchasing and shipping the Indian goods I was unwilling, and to urge M<sup>r</sup>. Delap, from his general assurances of friendship, to pledge himself for so large a sum as must ruin his credit if he did not punctually pay it, and if he did, must stop his business; at a time, too, when the prospects were against us, I could not have the confidence of attempting. If I had, I should doubtless have been refused. If I had not, he must have been ruined in his business. Under this situation, I hesitated some days, and finally determined to suspend any attempt to purchase for a short time, in which I might probably have remittances and become acquainted with the best places for purchasing. I accordingly left Bourdeaux for Paris the last of June. My arrival here and the affairs I became engaged in on the public account has been particularly related to you in my long letters by M<sup>r</sup>. Crery, which brought my affairs down to the beginning of September, when intelligence from America, passing through England, represented our affairs as desperate. In the mean time, I had nothing to oppose to this torrent, which for several months bore every thing down, but my simple assertions, unsupported by any letters or intelligence direct. During this time I had many apparently generous offers made to me of credit for a larger sum than the contract; but when I came to explain, I found that M. Delap was known to be my Banker at Bourdeaux and Mess<sup>rs</sup>. Germany, Girardot & Co. in Paris, and that I was expected to get them to endorse my Bills, or, in

other words, to become my security for the money. This reduced me to my first difficulties, which were no way lessened by months successively elapsing without either intelligence or remittances. This induced me finally to despatch Capt. Morgan, and that he might not go empty, I purchased a quantity of Saltpetre, which, however, contrary winds prevented his receiving in time, and he returned in ballast. M<sup>r</sup> Delap afterwards shipped it, together with a quantity of powder, &c., &c., in Capt. Sarly and Captain Hutchinson, of which he informed you. The last bills he received, to the amount of £5,000 Sterling, were all protested, except one of £250. This, with many other discouraging circumstances, has made that gentleman decline advancing in the American commerce. Meantime, finding no person in France ready to advance, as I may say, unconditionally except Mons<sup>r</sup> Beaumarchais, and that he was confined to the supplies for the Army, I gave him in my list for those supplies as large a proportion of woollen cloths and blankets as might enable you to supply the Indians with some of the more pressing necessities. M<sup>r</sup> Delap has not yet sent me his account, but I presume he may in the whole have received seven or eight thousand pounds sterling. The fitting out the vessels from Bourdeaux on account of Congress, the payment for saltpetre, and other articles shipped by him on account of the Congress, with the money advanced to me, may leave a balance in his hands of 2,000£ Sterl<sup>g</sup>. But this account, when received, shall be forwarded to you, by which you will be able to see at once what has, and what has not, been in my power.

I continued to give encouragement that vessels would certainly arrive soon, until I feared for my own reputation. In the month of October, meeting with 2,000 barrels of powder, I purchased it on credit & shipped it to Martinico. This I was induced to do from the price (13 sols) and the certain knowledge I had that it would rise. It has since risen to 22 sols. It was shipped in November for M<sup>r</sup> Bingham at Mar-



tinico, & insured at 2 per Cent. The time of payment arrived & I was unable to pay, without having recourse to a fund advanced by our friends here, which, though I wished to have reserved for other purposes, D<sup>r</sup> Franklin advised me to discharge this demand with. In M<sup>r</sup> Morris' letters, by D<sup>r</sup> Franklin, he informed me that commercial matters were put into the hands of M<sup>r</sup> T<sup>s</sup> Morris.

*Lee Papers, Harvard University.*

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ARTHUR LEE TO RICHARD H. LEE.

Burgos in Spain, March 6<sup>th</sup>, 1777.

DEAR SIR,—As you regard the interests of our Country, I beseech you to take more care for the future in what hands her commercial concerns are trusted. A drunken, ignorant, vulgar Dutchman, called Myrkle, is hawking the credit of the Congress all over France & Holland. He has imposed upon you so as to get your Commissions, as being a Merchant of credit, & with them he is endeavoring to raise that credit, which he would not otherwise have in Europe for an hundred pounds. You may conceive what an impression it must make of the wisdom & dignity of the Congress when a man not known in the lowest character of a merchant, of the meanest & most vulgar appearance, and openly addicted to the lowest debauchery & drunkenness, produces the vouchers of being confided in by you to the amount, I think, of fifty thousand. He assumes, besides, the greatest consequence, as having general powers from you. He has had cunning enough (& this is his sole talent) to hold a correspondence somehow with Gen<sup>l</sup> Washington, whose Letters he shews about as proofs of the high estimation & character he bears in America. I vow to God I am ashamed to think that such a contemptible wretch should gain your confidence, even to be skipper of the Ship whose Cargoe he is dissipat'g & totally neglecting her.

To mend this, the superintendent general of your Commerce is immersed, & has been so ever since his coming over, in the lowest debauchery & sottishness. Irrecoverably & notoriously so. Think then, how much your commercial interests must suffer in the hands of two such men, & how low they must sink your credit, which, from the pressure of the war stopping your remittances, it will become every day more & more necessary to have recourse to.

The Alderman in London, from his knowledge, his industry & his integrity, woud make the best controller general of your Commerce that coud possibly be found. But the business is so involved now that I could not advise him to accept it, were you to appoint him. The first object is to get rid of those who are both a disgrace & a detriment to the business, for I am certain that the commerce, left to itself, woud do infinitely better than in their hands. If any one, however, could retrieve it, it would be the Alderman, who I know woud hazard a great deal to be of service. You may depend that we shall be continually sending you assistance, so that I hope you will be able to weather this campaign, & before another, if not sooner, I think our enemies will assuredly have work at home.

I am told here,\* from authority on which I can rely, that if you send to New Orleans & the Havannah you will find persons directed to lend you Arms & Ammunition, & it is conceivd here that taking possession of Pensacola woud facilitate that communication much. As South Carolina is certain of not being invaded this Summer, that might be her work. I shall endeavor to get a supply of Specie for the two colonies of Virginia & S. Carolina thro the same channel.

Adieu !

*Lee Papers, Harvard University.*

\* Grimaldi met Lee at Burgos and prevented him from going to Madrid.



TO CONRAD A. GERARD.

SIR,—Inclosed is a letter which I ask the favor of you to deliver his Excellency, and explain to him, in French. I received Letters last Night from London that six Ships of the Line are ordered to join Lord Howe; one hundred Frigates were ordered to America before, & by the ordering these Ships of the Line it is supposed that whilst the Frigates extend themselves along the Coast, these Shipp's of the Line, with a part of the Frigates, will be Constantly in Readiness for any West India Expedition. I had closed my Letter to Mons. Le Comte before I recollected this, which is all the material Intelligence I have rec'd from London, & which please to Communicate to him. I have the honor to remain,

Sir, Your most obedient  
& Very Hum. Serv<sup>t</sup>,  
S. DEANE.

March 15th, 1777.

Enclosure.

TO COUNT DE VERGENNES.

A Packet Boat is arrived at Nantz by which we received, yesterday, Letters from the Congress of the United States confirming the Accounts lately received of the Action in the Jersies, &c., nearly as I have had the honor of relating to your Excellency. We have also received fresh Instructions on several Subjects of very great importance, which we ask the earliest Opportunity of communicating to your Excellency, and if agreeable will wait on you Tomorrow morning for that purpose, or such other hour as shall be more convenient.

I have the honor to remain, with the most profound Respect,

Your Excellency's most Obed.

Hum. Serv.,

SILAS DEANE.

March 15th, 1777.

TO ROBERT MORRIS.

Paris, March 16<sup>th</sup>, 1777.

DEAR SIR,—I shall write you at large in a few days by Captain Hammond, who will return by express. This, by the Marquis de La Fayette, is to inform you that this gentleman is of one of the most capital fortunes, and as he will incline to live up to his rank as far as is possible in America at this time, he will have occasion to draw bills. I have, therefore, recommended him to your house for supplies, and to refund in bills, on which you may rely. He has at his own expense equipped the ship he goes out in. The Coll<sup>rs</sup> Deleser & Valfort have greatly distinguished themselves in the last war in Europe, & I am confident will do the same in America. I recommend them to your protection and encouragement, and doubt not that they will receive that notice and regard due their merits. Mr. Hodge is at Dunkirk, Captain Wickes at Nantes; captains Nicholson & Hynson are here, but will soon set out on an adventure, of which more hereafter. Doctor Bancroft is arrested in London for corresponding with and assisting us—this worthy man is confined in the Bastile of England, for the suspension of the Habeas Corpus has enabled the wicked tyrant and his slaves to make a Bastile of every prison in England.

I feel more for Doctor Bancroft than I can express; he deserves much from us; consequently will be pursued with the utmost rigour by them, though nothing capital, not even the correspondence, can be proved. I wish we may be able to assist him. You will see the tryal of John the Painter, & that I am held up as a capital Actor in that affair, which came nigh destroying all their naval stores at one blow, & that I have fled from Paris to the Lord knows where. While I grieve for my friend Bancroft's confinement, I laugh at their foolish publications and despise their menaces. My health is happily returned, & hope rises superior to every difficulty. My compliments to all friends, particularly to



Mrs. Morris. I am, dear Sir, with much esteem, your most obedient servant,

SILAS DEANE.

*Lee Papers, Harvard University.*

TO CONRAD A. GERARD.

Mr. Deane has the honor of presenting his best Compliments to Mons. Gerard. He waited for an Answer, knowing how precious his Excellency's Time is, & not being willing to interfere with his other Concerns. Mr. Deane will do himself the honor of waiting on his Excellency to-morrow morning, & will previously call on Mons. Gerard. Docr. Franklin has a turn of his Gout, but I hope will be able to come with him.

March 18th, 1777.

*Stevens's Facsimiles, No. 658.*

TO CONRAD A. GERARD.

SIR,—I have the honor of sending you inclosed a Letter for his Excellency, & the Memoires I referred to this Morning are included in the Letter. The Memoires may want Explanation, to which I will attend at any Day or hour. I wish his Excellency may be able to obtain an early Consideration of the Subject of the Letter I have now the honor to transmit him. I am, with the most profound Esteem & Respect,

Sir, your most Obedt. &

Very Hum. Servt.,

SILAS DEANE.

Versailles, 19th March, 1777.

To his Excellency, the Count de Vergennes.

SIR,—We have lately received an Express from the Congress of the United States of North America containing some new instructions to us, the purport of which it is proper your Excellency should be acquainted

with. The Congress, tho' firmly determined to maintain as long as possible their independance, whither assisted or not by any other power, yet, for the sake of humanity wishing universal Peace, would not for the Advantage of America only desire to kindle a War in Europe, the Extent & duration of which cannot be Forseen. They therefore, on this Account, as well as for Reasons of Respect to the King whose Character they venerate, do not presume to propose that France should enter into a War merely on their Account. But if France, to obtain Satisfaction from Brittain for the injuries received in the last War commenced by that Nation, or for any other just causes, should think it right to improve the present occasion in declaring War against Great Brittain, we are directed, to induce, if it may be, the more early Declaration, To offer the following advantages in addition to those of Commerce already proposed.

1<sup>st</sup> That the Object of the War be to obtain for France Satisfaction for the Injuries aforesaid, & for the United States the Establishment of their Independance, with a reduction of the British Powers for the Security both of France & America, to which Ends it is proposed that the Conquest of Canada, Nova Scotia, Newfoundland, St. Johns, the Florida's, Bermuda, Bahama & all the West India Islands now in possession of Brittain be attempted by the joint Force of France & the United States, and, in case of Success, half the Fishery of Newfoundland, together with all the Sugar Islands, shall thereafter appertain to France, the rest to the United States, & the trade between the Kings Dominions & the United States shall thenceforth be carried on by the Ships of said Dominions, & of the United States only.

2<sup>d</sup> That in case it is agreed that the Conquest of the british Sugar Islands be attempted, the United States shall, on timely notice, furnish provisions for the Expedition To the amount of Two Million Dollars, with six Frigates mann'd of not less than 24 Guns each, with



such other Assistance as may be in their power & becoming good Allies.

3<sup>d</sup> That, as a close connection is understood to Subsist between France & Spain, & that their Interests are the Same, it is also proposed by the Congress that in case Spain shall enter with France into the said War, the United States will, if thereto required, declare War against Portugal (which has already insulted their commerce), and will continue the said war for the total Conquest of that Kingdom, to be added to the Dominion of Spain.

4<sup>th</sup> That a Peace shall not be made but by mutual consent. But if it be determined by his most Christian Majesty to remain in Peace with Great Brittain, The Congress do then pray that his Majesty would use his influence with Europe for preventing the further Transportation of foreign Troops into America to serve against the United States, & to obtain a recall of those already there. And, having unbounded confidence in the Kings Goodness & Wisdom, they pray his advice in their present circumstances, whither to apply to any of the other Powers of Europe for Auxiliary Aids, or to make Offers of Peace to Brittain on Condition of their Independancy being acknowledged. In neither of these Points would the Congress take a step without consulting his Majestys Ministers, & We hope for a favorable answer. We have the honor to remain, with the most profound Respect,

Your Excellency's most Obedt. & most Humb. Servts.,

SILAS DEANE in behalf of himself & B. FRANKLIN,

Commissioners Plenipotentiary

for the United States of America.

Versailles, 18th March, 1777.

P. S. The Congress & the People of the United States Continue unanimous in their Opposition to the claims of Brittain, & are fully determined To Assert their own independancy to the last. There is no doubt but Brittain would, on certain Commercial Terms, ac-

knowledge their independance. If the United States can have no aid from France directly, & if no encouragement can be given to receive support in a short space of time, as the United States wish for nothing so much as Peace & Liberty, they wish & ask for advice under those Circumstances, whither they should, through the Friendly interposition of His most Christian Majesty, or other ways, make Offers of Peace to Great Britain on that Condition of their independance, or pursue the War and risque the Event.

#### Memoire.

The United States of North America desire a Loan of Two Millions Sterling.

This Sum they want partly for the purchasing of Stores in Europe, & partly for the payment of their Army in America.

It is proposed that a Company be established which shall have Liberty to issue Bank Notes or Billets to the Amount of Two Millions Sterling.

That s<sup>d</sup> Company shall Contract to supply his Majesty's Navy with Masts, Sparrs, &c., &c., to a certain Annual Amount, for which they shall receive their Notes in payment, & on receiving shall immediately cancel the same.

That this Company lend the United States of North America the Sum of Two Millions Sterling. One Million in the Paper of the Congress paid into the Continental Treasury, & the other Million to their order in France, for which Two Millions the Congress shall pay an Interest of P Ct. annually in the Notes of the Company, or other ways to their acceptance, and shall also pay the principal of the Two Millions in 10 years.

By a Scheme of this nature well digested, & faithfully executed, the United States may be supplied without any apparent interference of Government, and his Majesty receive supplies for his Navy, at the Same



Time that his Subjects will secure a most beneficial Commerce.

March 18<sup>th</sup>, 1777.

Proposals.

1<sup>st</sup> There shall be laid out in the most fertile part of the Country purchased, or to be purchased of the Nations on the Banks of the Mississippi or Ohio a Tract of Land equall to Three Hundred Miles Square, which shall be appropriated as a Security for the hiring of Money by the United States of North America.

2<sup>d</sup> Each subscriber or Lender of Money shall have secured to him, as many Acres of that Land, as He shall subscribe Livres, no subscriptions to be received under One thousand, or twelve hundred Livres, which Land shall remain as a Security for the repayment of the Money by each person Subscribing, & Interest, within a Certain Period at the expiration of which, the Subscriber shall have the Advantage of choosing, whither he will receive the Land, & dispose of it for his Benefit, or his Capital advanced and Interest.

*Stevens' Facsimiles, Nos. 659, 660, 661, 662.*

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TO THE BARON DE KALB.

Paris, March 22<sup>d</sup>, 1777.

SIR,—I send herewith letters which you were before charged with. In addition to which I have wrote to Mr. Hancock and Mr. Morris, particularly on your and the Marquis' account, which, I trust, will give you a reception worthy of you and the errand you go on. You will remember the letters you mention from the Marquis, and favour me with one, if you have time. As I formerly hinted to you, I now repeat, that you will find the Congress generous at the same time that they are frugal, and a general reliance on them, independent of any thing else, will help to render you the more agreeable to them and to the people. My earnest

vows are for your and my much esteemed Marquis' safe and happy voyage. Make my compliments to him, and tell him that when I write next, I hope my letters will find him in Connecticut, at my house.

I am, &c.,

S. DEANE.

Mons<sup>r</sup>. Le Baron de Kalb.

*Lee Papers, Harvard University.*

# TO THE COUNT DE VERGENNES.

Paris, March 22<sup>d</sup>, 1777.

SIR,—I received last evening authentic accounts of the proceedings in America to the 26<sup>th</sup> of January, when Lord Cornwallis had retreated to Amboy, and was returning thence to New York by water; that in his retreat many severe skirmishes happened—in one of which two regiments of his Lordship's forces were well nigh destroyed and taken; that Kings Bridge, Fort Washington, and those posts before abandoned by the forces of the United States, were retaken by the army under General Washington, &c., &c.; that the army of the United States was in great want of Artillery and many other necessities, and kept up their resolution chiefly by their late successes, and the firm expectation of Foreign assistance.

From London I learn that the people were amused with the idle and inconsistent story of "John the Painter," and their resentments turned against me personally; while certain persons were meditating to seize my person here, and suddenly transport me to England, &c., &c. Though I am very secure under your Excellency's protection, yet I think it but proper to acquaint you with whatever intelligence I receive on any subject relating to American affairs that may be relied on.

Sensible of the importance of the requests & propositions, I had the honor of sending you a few days since, I would by no means appear impatient, but the



critical situation of American affairs at this time, and the desire of despatching to the Congress some intelligence of what they may probably expect will be the answer to their requests, makes me entreat as early a consideration of those proposals as may be consistent with your other important concerns.

I have the honor to remain,  
with the most profound respect,  
Your Excellency's, &c.

S. DEANE.

*Lee Papers, Harvard University.*

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TO CONRAD A. GERARD.

Paris, March 22<sup>d</sup>, 1777.

SIR,—Enclosed is a letter for his Excellency, which I pray you to deliver. I have also troubled you with a short Memoir on the subject I had the honor of mentioning to you the other day, and pray you would send me a line, informing me whether the petition of Mr. Cunningham can be granted, and what will be the expences attending it. As he proposes going out of town soon, I am the more urgent for an early answer.

I have the honor, &c.,

S. DEANE.

Mons<sup>r</sup>. Gérard.

Memoir.

Mr. Cunningham, a gentleman of family & fortune in Ireland, who has been many years respectably established in business in Philadelphia, is about to settle at Martinico, for carrying on to the greatest advantage commerce between France and the United States of North America, for which reason he is desirous of being naturalized in this Kingdom. He is a protestant by religious profession, but will ever make it his study to maintain the character, he has hitherto universally held, of a peaceable and useful member of

society. As his business obliges him soon to leave Paris, he prays to be informed whether his petition can be granted, and what are the forms & modes of proceeding necessary to be attended to.

Paris, March 22<sup>d</sup>, 1777.

*Lee Papers, Harvard University.*

TO CONRAD A. GERARD.

Mr. Deane's Compliments to Mon. Gerard; he received his Billet of yesterday, & is obliged to him for the care of his dispatches. The Treaty with the Farmers General has been retarded on acct. of Docr. Franklin's illness, but it was signed this Morning & is finished; it extends only to Two Million of Livres. Mr. Deane hopes that Docr. Franklin will be able to be out in a day or two.

March 24<sup>th</sup>, 1777.

*Stevens's Facsimiles, No. 665.*

TO CONRAD A. GERARD.

SIR,—Inclos'd is a Letter for his Excellency, which I must pray you to procure me a reply to by the Bearer. Docr. Franklin is now able to wait on his Excellency, and Our Affairs are extremely urgent, and the Subject on which we have Orders to confer of the last importance, as well as to France as to the United States of America,

I have the honor to remain, with much Esteem,  
Your most Obedt. & very humble Servt.,

SILAS DEANE.

Paris, March 26th, 1777.

Enclosure.

To his Excellency The Count de Vergennes:

By an express which left America the beginning of February, we have received fresh Instructions from



the Congress of the United States on several Subjects of great importance, which we wish to have the earliest Opportunity of communicating to your Excellency, & for that purpose must ask the honor of an Audience To morrow morning; if the day following is more agreeable, you will much oblige us by signifying The Time by the Bearer. I have the honor To remain, with the most profound respect,

Your Excellency's most Obedt.

& Very Humble Servt.,

SILAS DEANE.

Paris, March 26th, 1777.

*Stevens's Facsimiles, Nos. 666, 667.*

ROBERT MORRIS TO COMMISSIONERS FOR AMERICAN  
AFFAIRS IN EUROPE.

Philad<sup>a</sup>, March 28, 1777.

HONOURABLE GENTLEMEN,—I wrote you a few Lines the 7<sup>th</sup> Instant by Mons<sup>r</sup> Coleaux, and sent you the News papers to that time; by this Conveyance I send another packet of them under cover to M<sup>r</sup> Delap, at Bordeaux. There are only two Members of the Committee of Correspondence here at present, the rest being absent on leave.

Gen<sup>l</sup> Howes Army in the Jerseys still remains inactive and greatly distress'd for want of Forage and fresh Provisions, which they can not obtain any tolerable plenty, as our Army are posted all round them, have removed most of the Hay, Corn & Provisions that was near Brunswick, and never suffer a foraging part of the Enemy to stir out but they attack them, and altho' they came out strong enough to drive our People from their Posts very frequently, yet it has always happened the reverse, for they are constantly driven back into Brunswick with considerable loss of Men, Horses, Waggons, &c. Their Situation is disagreeable, and for that and other reasons I cannot

think they will be content with it much longer, especially as desertion is become frequent amongst their best British Troops. The Grenadiers, more or less of them, come over to us every week. You being at so great a Distance may probably think we ought to have destroy'd Mr. Howe's Army by this Time, & so we undoubtedly should had we [our Army Collected] an Army to do it; but when it is considered that General Washington has drove them from their Cantonements on Delaware to Brunswick, & confin'd them there the whole Winter, during which he has killed and taken between three & four thousand of their Men, four to five hundred Horses, a number of Waggons, & considerable Quantities of Stores, cloathing, &c., kept them pent up in a place where they are ill supplied with Provisions and other Necessaries, which has produced Desertion, discontent, and sickness, it will astonish all Mankind to learn that he had not during that whole time one half their Numbers in the Field, & the greatest part of the Troops he had consisted of raw Militia that never saw a Gun fired in anger untill opposed by this very formidable Army. It is now evident to all America that if in the beginning of this contest we had inlisted our Army for a number of years or during the War, General Howe could not have wintered here unless a Prisoner, but alas! our Army were disbanded by the nature of their Inlistments when they could be most useful, and the Militia are too much their own Masters to expect from them a steady adherence to the extreme Fatigues of a long & hard Winters Campaign; they turned out for a Month or six Weeks, shew great bravery whilst they stay, but curiosity once being gratified and some feat performed to make a good Story at Home, they become Impatient to Return to their Families, and neither persuasion nor principle can detain them; for this Reason General Washington's Army since November last has consisted every Month of fresh raw Hands, a constant shifting Scene of Comers & goers.



You might suppose him ten to fifteen or twenty thousand strong by the Commissaries & Quarter Master's returns, but never five thousand by the Adjutant General's, for he never had so many at any one time with him. The constant movements of Militia, & the large Bountys & high Wages given them has hurt the recruiting Service exceedingly, for those that would have inlisted, by turning out a [s] Militia for a short time, have got more Money than their pay and Bounty as Soldiers would amount to, and they are more their own Masters. In short, the systems adopted by Congress respecting the Army were formed without Experience, and have not been equal to what was expected from them. They are now, and for some time have been, correcting these Errors, so that I hope to see a formidable Army under Wise and wholesome Regulations in a very short time, as the General is now drawing all the new Recruits together, & as his hands are strengthened with sufficient Power. I have no doubt he will do Business with them this Summer if the Number raised are sufficient to face the Enemy, and this I am inclined to believe will be the Case. The Garrison at Ticondaraga will be strong enough to dispute the Passage there with Carlton, and if you do but effect an European War to employ the British Navy, this Country will become Free & Independant in a shorter time than could be expected. I fancy General & Lord Howe have it in View to attack this City; they may possibly get Possession, & if they do it will probably bring on their Ruin, for they will thus raise a Nest of Hornets that they do not expect, and are taught to believe very differently.

I am most truly,

Gent<sup>l</sup>,

Your most obedient Serv<sup>t</sup>,

ROBT. MORRIS.

*Thomas Mss*

1128434

TO CHARLES W. F. DUMAS.

Extract of a letter from Paris, dated April 2, 1777.

Mr. Carmichael, who has regularly corresponded with you, has given you the salutation from time to time; for myself, I have really had no leisure for several months to write a single letter but what the instant necessity of the time required, and am much obliged to you for the regular information we have received from you through him. Inclosed, I send you a bill for one thousand florins, which you will receive and credit the congress for the same. As you have said nothing at any time on the subject of your disbursements for the congress, the commissioners are ignorant of your situation in that respect, and have desired me to send you the inclosed bill, and to ask of you to favour them with the general state of your disbursements, and to assure you that they are too sensible of the services you are rendering their country to wish you to remain without an adequate reward. We have no intelligence of any kind from America since the first of March last, and you have been informed of the situation of our affairs at that time. I am,

With the greatest respect and esteem,  
Dear sir, your most obedient and  
Very humble servant,

S. DEANE.

M. Dumas.

*The Port Folio, III., 356, Nov. 5, 1803.*

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TO CONRAD A. GERARD.

SIR,—I sent the inclosed last Evening, a few Minutes after you left Paris, and therefore now send my Servant express with it. I cannot but feel uneasy until I have fully vindicated my Conduct in this Affair, and therefore ask you not only to Communicate the Letters to his Excellency, but to inform him that I rely



upon him to shew those Letters, if necessary in my Justification, To his Majesty and his other Ministers.

I have the honor to remain, with the utmost respect,

Sir, your most Obedt and

Very Hum. Serv.,

SILAS DEANE.

Paris, 3<sup>d</sup> April, 1777.

Enclosure.

SIR,—You have, enclosed, Two Original Letters from the Baron du Kalb, which please to present to his Excellency the Comte De Vergennes, and tell him I refer to my uniform Conduct to justify what I have had the honor of relating to you this Evening as to Facts. Mons. Comte De Broglie has received this Evening a Letter from Mons. Le Marquiss De Fayette, which he will communicate. I refer to that Nobleman, & am willing to rely on his relation of this Affair for my Justification, more for my approbation, since to gain a most Gallant & Amicable Young Nobleman to espouse Our Cause, and to give to the World a Specimen of his native & hereditary bravery surely cannot be deemed Criminal. I have nothing to add to what I have had the honor of relating to you personally on this Subject, except that I rely on the Count De Broglie to explain any and every part of my Conduct in this Affair; that my Colleagues have had no knowledge of it, as it was executed in November last, long before their arrival, and that I shall do every thing in my power to satisfy every one that my Conduct has been & shall be strictly honorable.

I have the honor to be

Your most Obedt. & Very Hum. St.,

SILAS DEANE.

April 2<sup>d</sup>, 1777.

The dispatches shall go by the first packet, which will sail the 15th inst., & I will send his Excellency a

Copy of the Letters from me, which shall accompany them.

Mons<sup>r</sup> Gerard.

*Stevens's Facsimiles, Nos. 673, 674.*

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TO THE COMTE DE VERGENNES.

Paris, April 5<sup>th</sup>, 1777.

SIR,—I have the honor of enclosing to your Excellency agree[a]bly to my promise to M<sup>r</sup> Gerard, copies of my letters respecting M. La Fayette, which I hope will be agreeable. I can only say I have felt much on the occasion for the delicate honor of the Marquis lest some report injurious to him should be spread in this country. No country need be ashamed of him, and I am sure he will one day justify to the world that my early prejudices in his favour were well founded.

Our intelligence by the last express came down to the last of Feb<sup>y</sup>. The vessel sailed the 2<sup>d</sup> of March, & at that time nothing material had happened. Lord Cornwallis was at Brunswick & Amboy, and General Washington at Elizabeth Town, Morristown, &c., and was increasing his army. Daily encounters happened, & generally to the advantage of the Americans. The Congress were well united & fully determined to support their Independence, but were under many difficulties on account of cannon & warlike stores, but particularly on account of a number of vessels of considerable force to secure some of their harbours where their fleet might assemble. Mean time, Lord Howe has spread his cruisers from one end to the other of the continent, so that, should only two ships of the Line strike on him in any one part, he must be broken essentially, & the operations of the succeeding campaign frustrated. I have the honor, also, of enclosing a letter from Mons<sup>r</sup> Grand, at Amsterdam, & am, with



the most profound respect, your Excellency's most obedient & most humble servant,

SILAS DEANE.

P. S. If the enclosed letters to Gen<sup>l</sup> Washington and President Hancock are not quite agreeable to his Majesty's designs, I will alter them as I shall be directed. Our Courier will go by the 15<sup>th</sup> of this month for America

Enclosures.

Paris, April 5<sup>th</sup>, 1777.

SIR,—It was with great satisfaction and the most flattering prospects of serving my Country, that I lately recommended to your particular notice the Marquis de La Fayette, a young Nobleman of the first rank, family, and fortune, and who adds to all these the most ardent zeal to distinguish himself in a cause which is justly considered as the most noble and generous. But, when I recommended this gallant young hero, I little thought of any subsequent difficulty. Such, however, has arisen, and the enclosed letters, I am assured, announce to him his recall. Moreover, I am directed to inform your Excellency that his going, being without the approbation or knowledge of the King, is disagreeable, and that his Majesty expects that you will not permit him to take any command under you; but that he should be directed immediately to return. However disagreeable this may be to Mons<sup>r</sup> La Fayette, I am confident that the respect he will pay to the requisition, which I have the honor to enclose, will induce him to comply therewith in the most ready and agreeable manner, and that you will effect it so as to give satisfaction to his Majesty, and without occasioning public observations or reports disagreeable to the Marquis, who, I am sure, will comply with the orders sent without giving you or any one in

power in the United States the disagreeable task of interposing.

I have the honor to be, &c., &c.,

S. DEANE.

Gen<sup>l</sup> Washington.

Paris, 5th April, 1777.

SIR,—I am directed to inform your Excellency that the Marquis de La Fayette, whom I lately had the honor of recommending, left France without the approbation of his Majesty, who has ordered him to return, and expects that he will not be employed in the service of the United States, after they become acquainted with his Majesty's requisitions to him to return. I have written to his Excellency, General Washington, on this subject, copy of which I have the honor to enclose, and am, with the most profound respect,

Your Excellency's most obedient

& very humble servant,

SILAS DEANE.

To John Hancock, President of Congress.

*Lee Papers, Harvard University.*

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#### TO COUNT DE VERGENNES.

To his Excellency, the Comte de Vergennes.

SIR,—The present Situation of England, and of her Fleet and Armies in America, afford an Opportunity for making such a diversion, in favor of the United States, as cannot fail of weakening & exhausting England, & will undoubtedly give the United States of America a superiority by Land, and effectually relieve their Commerce by Sea, which effected, they would soon be in a Condition to repay the Monies borrowed, or Sums for which they may become indebted in Europe, and establish effectually their Credit. The Strength of England at this time by Land & Sea in Europe is well known to your Excellency;



by Land they have no Forces, either in England or Ireland, of any consequence; & the moment an invasion is really apprehended in either Kingdom, the Militia must be called out; and whilst they make their principal, & first dependance on their Fleet, they know too well at the same time, that such a Security is not to be relied on without a Force by Land of some sort or other, & they must apply to their Militia for they can have no other. The moment they become so alarmed as to call out the Militia, all reinforcements to their Army in America must be stopp'd; an immense national expence will be instantly occasioned, beside the Loss of the Time of their Labourers, & Manufactures. This expence with the alarm which occasioned it will sink the Stocks, & impede if not wholly prevent the Loan they are making, which will defeat at once their Operations for the coming Season. By preventing their Reinforcements, the United States will instantly obtain a Superiority by Land in America. Lord Howe would be instantly apprized of the Alarm given here, & must collect his Fleet to one point, to secure not only themselves but the retreat of the Army, which is constantly obliged to the Fleet for its security & its Supplies; this would at once open the ports of the United States, & enable them to send their produce to Market, of which they have large quantities in Store, sufficient if at Market, to supply their present demands. This may be effected with very little or no additional expence, to France, by embarking a few Thousand Men on board the Fleet at Brest, & at other ports, & ordering them actually to sail, apparently, as an Expedition of importance. This would effect the Alarm wish'd for, with all its important Consequences, even if such Fleet & Army, should after a few Days, return to their former or a different position without actual hostilities. But if, before intelligence could be sent to Lord Howe, Four or Five sail only of the Line, could be sent directly to New York, his Lordship would be

found there with not more than two or three Vessels of any Force, and with near Three hundred sail of unarmed Transports which must fall into the hands of these Four or Five Shippes of the Line, & with the Number of Sailors, give such a blow to the English Marine as would disenable them to continue the War with the United States, or to wage a new one with any other Power—but as this last proposition involves in it a War between the Two Nations, I defer urging any thing on that Subject untill we are favored with an Answer to the Memoire we had the honor of presenting. Meantime the movement which I have now the honor of proposing, can give no just ground for Complaint on the part of England, and I humbly conceive, cannot fail of producing the above Effects.

I have the honor to remain, with the most profound respect, Your Excellency's most Obedient, & Very hum. Serv.

SILAS DEANE.

Paris, April 7th, 1777.

*Stevens's Facsimiles, No. 679.*

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TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

•Paris, 8th April, 1777.

SIR,—The bearer, Viscount Mourreu, is the gentleman of whom I formerly wrote, and who has been long detained by a variety of accidents, which he can relate to you at large. The engagements taken with him were previous to the arrival of my colleagues, who have not therefore intermeddled in the affair. His character and abilities are high in estimation here, and the Comte de Broglie has written in particular to General Washington. He served under the Comte, who commanded the armies of France with reputation in the last war.

I have the honor to be, with the most profound respect, &c.,

SILAS DEANE.

*Diplomatic Correspondence, Amer. Rev., I., 104.*



TO CONRAD A. GERARD.

Paris, 8th April, 1777.

SIR,—Capt. Johnson, late commander of the Yankee privateer, arrived last Evening from America. He left Baltimore the 27th of February, & has brought dispatches from the Congress. No decisive action had happened, and General Washington was recruiting his Army, whilst the Congress & People kept up their Resolution and Spirit, relying that They should soon receive large Supplies from hence, and have relief by a diversion in their Favor.

I received your assurances that my Consent respecting the Marquiss La Fayette was justly represented, but as the Marquiss is actually returned, I wait your Orders what to do with the Letters sent me for him. I had inclosed them, & they would have been sent last Evening, but for his return.

I shall do myself the honor of waiting on you at Versailles early Tomorrow Morning, in order To give you an Explanation of the curious Affair I have lately been conducting, & which I believe is now finished. I cannot let any Opportunity pass without urging the Necessity of your giving us instant aid & support. You know the Style in which I have at all Times both wrote & spoke on this Subject. I now refer you to the several Memoires I have had the honor of presenting, in which you will find I pointed out very early the possible & the probable Events of the last Campaign & the Consequences. Time has justified my predictions in every particular, and it is with the deepest Anxiety of mind I now foresee that the United States will be distress'd to the last degree, if not absolutely ruined, in the next Campaign, unless relieved from some Quarter or another, and I cannot think with patience either on their failing in their Struggle, their accomodating with England, or of their being assisted from other quarters than from France. The Interests of France & the United States are mutual,

and will not interfere in the Natural Course of Things ; on this surest of all Foundations Our Connections, Friendship, & Alliance may rest forever. It is certainly the most critical period, & Consequences of infinite importance depend on improving the present Moment. I have taken the Liberty of addressing the inclosed to his Excellency on the Subject ; they are my private Sentiments, & shall be happy if they meet his approbation. Every thing depends on decisive measures, and the Ministry in England affirm at this hour that they are assured they have nothing to fear from the Continent, & it is that Security of theirs which enables them to pursue their measures, which will be Supported by the People of England whilst they continue secure. I have the honor to remain, with due Esteem,

Sir, Your most Obedt &

Very Hum. Serv.,

SILAS DEANE.

*Stevens's Facsimiles, No. 680.*

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TO CONRAD A. GERARD.

SIR,—I have the honor of sending you inclosed the little memoire I mentioned. It is rather to ask his Excellency's Opinion on the Subject generally, than entering minutely into it ; if it meet his Approbation, he can undoubtedly put us into a train to execute it. We have dispatched Our Letters from America, & have received nothing new since I had the honor of seeing you. As the Season advances, if the plan proposed is deemed practicable, The sooner entered on the better, & I will wait on you half an hour whenever it shall be agreeable. One Fisher, a Quaker, formerly of Philadelphia, arriv'd in Paris Two Days ago, and yesterday I learned that he came directly from the English Minister. What his Business is I know not, but, pretending to be an American, and



being a subtle, shrewd Fellow, he may, in the Communicative vein People here are in, get such intelligence as may do mischief. He lodges at present at the hotel Grand Bretagne, in the same street with me, and pretends he wants to engage Officers for America, from whence he fled Two Years ago on Account of his Principles.

I have the honor to remain, with the utmost respect,  
Sir, Your most Obed. &

Very Hum. Serv.,

SILAS DEANE.

Paris, 12th April, 1777.

Enclosure.

MEMOIRE.

The request of the Congress for Eight Shipp's of the Line not being granted, it is proposed, to supply this want of theirs as far and as early as possible, that Three stout Shipp's of Fifty to Sixty Guns each be purchased or hired in Sweden.

That they take on board and under their convoy in other Vessels The brass Cannon & other Stores requested by the Congress; also Anchors, Cordage, Sailcloth, and materials sufficient to equip the Number of Capital Ships wanted in America, where they may soon be built.

That to Effect This, one of the Commissioners make a Journey to Sweden, and in his way pass thro' Prussia and endeavor to obtain there the Liberty of Marine Ports, and of raising & recruiting Seamen, &c., &c.

By succeeding in this plan just hinted at, The United States may be furnished with the Fleet they want, & though not so early in the Season, yet on some accounts in a better manner & productive of better Consequences, since, could they obtain the Ships they want of either France or Spain, it would,

it is true, weaken their Friends just so much in Europe, whilst by the other method the United States will be in a Situation to render their Friends essential aid either in America or Europe.

The Commissioner may pass in a private Capacity, & may, with proper Letters of introduction to principal persons in Sweden, undoubtedly succeed, and the advantages must be great every way. These Ships may convoy back a Number of Tobacco Vessels to Europe & open the Commerce of America to a considerable degree.

April 12th, 1777.

*Stevens's Facsimiles, Nos. 682, 683.*

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TO CONRAD A. GERARD.

SIR,—Inclosed are the Letters designed for La Marquiss de Fayette. The Report in Paris is that Orders have been given to disarm Ten or twelve Sail of your Fleet, and that it was in Consequence of Assurances that the War between the United States & Great Brittain was about to be concluded. You may rely upon it, that every assurance of this kind is without the least Foundation, and is propagated to help out the Loan at this Critical Time, & prevent the falling of English Stocks. I cannot but repeat what I have often had the honor to tell you, that a small Diversion might be of infinite importance to Us at this time; without it, I cannot answer for the Consequences, Though it pains me to think of them. I have the honor to remain, with the utmost respect,

Sir, your most Obedt. &

Very Humble Serv<sup>t</sup>,

S. DEANE.

Paris, April 17<sup>th</sup>, 1777.

*Stevens's Facsimiles, No. 684.*



FROM BARON DE KALB.

On board the Ship la Victoire,  
At the Passage [Los Pasages] in Spain,

17 April, 1777.

SIR,—I had the honour of writing to you four days ago, in a sad mood of mind, about all the difficulties which seemed to obstruct M. Le Marquis de la Fayette's generous designs; as I made you a partaker of bad news, I think it a piece of justice to impart to you a good one. The Marquis guessing, by all the letters he received, that the Ministers granted and issued orders to stop his sailing, out of mere compliance with the requests of M. Le Duc d'Ayens, and that in reality neither the King nor any body else could be angry with [him], for so noble an Enterprise, he took upon him to come here again and to pursue his measures. He arrived this morning, nine of the clock, to the great comfort of all his fellow Passengers. M. de Mauroy arrived at the same time. So we shall put out to sea again by the first wind, and strive to get to the Continent directly as much as possible. All these Gentlemen present you with their most sincere Compliments and good wishes.

I wrote to M. le C<sup>te</sup> de Broglie, as well as to Madame de Kalb, if they had any letters to send to me before I could give them an account of myself after arrival at your army, to put them under cover, directed to Mr. Sam. Shoemaker at Philadelphia, and desire you to get them over when opportunities will offer. I depend on this and all other occasions on your goodness and friendship, to which, and Mr. Carmichael's, I recommend myself particularly, and am, with all possible respect, Honoured Sir,

Your most obedient humble servant,

DE KALB.

This letter will go by the to morrow's Post, but you shall hear from me the day of our putting under sail.

The marquis charges me peculiarly to acquaint you that his fear of involving you in some disagreeable Dilemma, and of doing hurt to our friends interest at the French court, was what determined him most to comply with the king's orders and go back to Bordeaux ; being willing to fall alone a sacrifice to resentment and make nobody share his misfortune, as long as he could believe these orders serious ; and that it is only since he is sure of your and your cause's security he assumed anew his most darling Project.

*The Independent, Jan. 22, 1874.*

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FROM WILLIAM CARMICHAEL.

Extract of a letter from Paris, dated April 21, 1777.

If my letters were to estimate the regard due to my dear St. John, he should have them in folios, but on this head I hope he neither wants proofs or assurances. In truth, although we have had a messenger from the land of promise, we have no news to communicate ; 'tis possible that the Philistines may make some appearance of advancing again towards Jordan and the sacred city, sacred since it is the residence of liberty ; but they will be repelled as soon as general W—h—on's army is found ; if all his reinforcements should not have joined him, Howe can make the attempt. In the meantime our friends, suffering for the want of every necessary to support the war, support their miseries with the hope of being joined, or strongly succoured by F. and S. But, like the mariner shipwrecked on a desert island, after long looking round for a friendly sail to relieve him, they must find in themselves those resources they hoped from others. I had been buoyed up by the hope, then depressed by despair, till at last I have almost brought myself to believe that we shall be victorious without assistance, a circumstance that will leave in our power the choice



of friends and allies. Depend on it, in that case, the inclinations of a disappointed people will not be turned where they now solicit and implore in vain. Knowing how much and how strongly the generality of our common people looked up to France, I encouraged a most promising young nobleman of high rank and fortune, married into the Noailles family, and nephew to the ambassador in England, to go out in a ship of his own to America with a few choice officers. I wrote and prepared all my acquaintance for his reception, insinuating that a man of his estate and rank would not leave France without knowing fully the disposition of its court; that their intentions certainly were war, &c. We kept our plan tolerably secret, but a cursed order overtook them at St. Sebastians; the ship is gone on, and my gallant friend is ordered to attend his father-in-law on his travels to Italy, so that what I intend to buoy up the people will serve to depress them. It is wonderful what little circumstances often have great effects; this may be an additional proof of the truth of the observation. I have been so tired of a state of uncertainty and inglorious inactivity, that I had determined to embark instantly for America; but these gentlemen think I can serve my country better in Europe, and have detained me on that account. I go again to Germany among the anthropophagi. Pray the goddess of liberty to shield me in a cloud, as Venus did the pious Æneas, or I may fall in their clutches, who, as our Milton says, will bless their lucky men destined to that good hour; and shall endeavour to send you extracts of newspapers as they come to hand. I beg the proper compliments, &c., to Madame, and am, with much truth, your friend and servant,

WM. CARMICHAEL.

M. Dumas.

*The Port Folio*, III., 350, Oct. 29, 1803

TO CONRAD A. GERARD.

SIR,—Agreeable to the Conversation Mr. Deane had the honor of with you, it is resolv'd on that one of Us shall pursue the proposed Journey to Holland, &c. You were pleased to say in a Letter to Mr. Grand that his Excellency approved of the plan, but that no official or ministerial Recommendation could be given, and referr'd Us to Mr. Grand, of Amsterdam. Mr. Grand has on every occasion been willing, & we doubt not, is still so, To assist us ; but, at the same Time, take leave To observe that, could the Person who undertakes this Journey, have a Letter to Mr. Grand, it would give him much greater confidence in undertaking to Assist Us, and, at the same Time, if he had simply Letters of introduction to his Majesty's Ministers at Holland, &c., it might be of very great advantage, as he might then be able to regulate his Conduct agreeable to the wishes of the Court of France. We submit the propriety of the measure to his Excellency, & have only to add that it will be necessary previous to setting out to have his advice personally, or through you on this subject, & We wait for his excellency to determine in which mode, & when We may receive it.

We have the honor to be, with much respect,

Sir, your most Obedient

& Very hum. Servts.,

SILAS DEANE,  
ARTHUR LEE.

P. S. The Urgency of Our Affairs must excuse us for asking an Answer as soon as Possible.

Paris, 23<sup>d</sup> April, 1777,

Rue Royale vis à vis Garde meuble de la Couronne.

*Stevens's Facsimiles, No. 685.*

TO CONRAD A. GERARD.

SIR,—Mr. Lee went into the Country this morning. I expect him back this Evening, when I will do myself



the honor of giving him your Letter. I have seen in the English papers a Memorial said to have been presented by Lord Stormont to his Majesty's Ministers at Versailles, at the close of which he refers to certain annexed papers which are said to contain facts relative to my Negotiations, &c. ; and, finally, prays that I may be delivered up. Though the full Confidence I have in the justice & honor of his Majesty & his Ministers prevents such a manœuvre giving me a moment's uneasiness, yet I confess I have a strong desire to know if this remonstrance published in England is genuine or fictitious ; and you will much oblige me by satisfying me by one line by the post or other ways on this Subject. I have the honor to remain, with the most perfect esteem,

Sir, your most Obedt. &  
Very hum. Servt.,

S. DEANE.

Rue Royale, Vis à Vis  
Garde Meuble de la Couronne,  
Friday, 2<sup>d</sup> May 1777.

Endorsed by Gerard: "replied that these papers are fictitious."

*Stevens's Facsimiles, No. 688.*

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TO CONRAD A. GERARD.

Paris, 11 May, 1777.

SIR,—Agreeable to my proposal last Evening I now have the honor of sending you this by Mr. Carmichael. Impatient to know what is the Fate of Capt. Cunningham, I pray you to inform me by Mr. Carmichael if he is, or is not arrested, and whither any other of the Officers or Crew are arrested. Also whither the Prizes may be permitted to quit the Port. The Report of Capt. Cunningham's not being an American Subject, but of Ireland, is groundless—he has lived many years in America, is a Citizen of

Philadelphia & has property there as well as a Wife & Children there, Born in America—it is true he was born in Ireland which is the case of many of the most respectable Inhabitants of that City with whom Capt. Cunningham has always been Concerned in Business. What may have occasioned this Report, was his passing for an Irishman sometime since in holland to extricate himself from some Difficulties to which Americans are more immediately liable at the present time. The facts then really are, That an American purchased a Vessel in England, took in Warlike Stores at Dunkirk, armed his vessel at Sea, & having a Commission from the United States made two prizes, with which he imprudently returned into Dunkirk. I acknowledge he was very much to blame for this last act, but have no apprehension that in Consequence he can be treated as a Pirate.

I have the honor to be with the most profound respect,

Sir, your most Obedt. &  
Very Hum. Servt,  
S. DEANE.

P. S. Since writing the above I rec'd a Letter from Bayonne, which is dated May 5th & says, a Vessel is arrived at Bilboa in Twenty-four Days from Boston, which says that Genl Howe after joining Lord Cornwallis had been obliged to retreat to New York with great Loss. That the Amphitrite was arrived in America, & the People of the United States, unanimous & in high spirits.

*Stevens's Facsimiles, No. 690.*

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TO CONRAD A. GERARD.

SIR,—I sent Mr. Carmichael express with the inclosed yesterday morning but unfortunately he did not meet with you at Versailles. Since Writing the Acct. I have now the honor of sending to you, an-



other Express is arrived which brings Accounts down to the 10th of April, confirming the former accounts, but nothing materially new. Two Vessels are Arrived at Bordeaux, with Tobacco, one of which took a Valuable prize, a Ship from Glasgow with Bale Goods for Quebec. The American had only 6 Guns & 11 men whilst the Scotchmen had 8 Guns & 15 men ; he sent the prize back to Boston. The English men of War cruise off the mouth of the Garonne, as a Gentleman from Bordeaux writes me, even within sight of the Cordaine Tower so that We have a bad prospect for the rest of the Shippes expected. I have the honor to remain most respectfully,

Sir, your most Obed<sup>t</sup> &

Very Hum. Serv.,

S. DEANE.

Rue Royale,

15th May, 1777.

Enclosures.

Paris, May 12th, 1777.

This day arrived an Express from Boston in New England which brings advices to the 3<sup>d</sup> of April. General Washington was well with the Army under his Command which was daily augmenting by the arrival of New Levies from the different States. There is no mention of any Sickness having been among them. There had been a small insurrection of Tories on the Eastern Shore of Maryland, but it was immediately suppress'd by the Congress Troops & the leaders made prisoners. The Armies both sides had remained quiet for Two Months except Skirmishes among foraging parties which had in almost every instance been to the advantage of the Insurgents. The last that happened was not far from Amboy & more important than common ; it is said to have been something similar to the Lexington Battle, The English retiring before the Militia, & some new raised Troops, for many miles and with the Loss of 500 killed, wounded, & taken prisoners. That the Quota of men to be

furnished by the Several States were in some already compleated & near being so in the rest, & the men engaging for Three years or untill the End of the War, the General would now have a permanent Army. That the Loans of Money to the Congress & the sale of their Lottery Tickets went on rapidly; and instead of being depress'd by the Sinister Events of the last Campaign & Threats of the next (in which it was said the English Army would be augmented with 20,000 men). The states are more firm & decisive, & better united than ever—The late irruption into the Jersies, the indiscriminate devastation & plunder by the British, & Hessian Troops there, & the unexampled Cruelties practised by both having induced many who had been disposed to favor them or were at the best but lukewarm, to enter now into the most resolute & zealous Opposition. That a Ship was arrived from Europe with 364 Cases of Arms containing 11,987 Stand, 1,000 Barrels of Gunpowder, 48 bales of Cloth for Soldier's Cloathing, and other Valuable Articles which arrived very seasonably. Two other Ships had arrived at a distant Port with the same kind of cargoes. That an English prize had been brought in among many smaller ones, which had on board Bale Goods to Amount of 40,000 £ Sterlg. whilst the Vessels taken from the Americans were of no Consequence, being for the most part Coasters, & Carriers of Wood, Fifty of which would not amount to the Value of one ship taken by the Americans. That there had been no attack on Ticonderoga. That the Continental Frigates Thirteen in Number carrying from 24 to 36 Guns each were at Sea, and the Congress had a Number of 74 Gun Ships building in New England which would be ready for the Sea early next Autumn.

SIR,—We attended your advice by Mr. Carmichael, respecting the Letters, & have now directed him to wait on you to know if you can give us any further intelligence respecting the unhappy affair at Dunkirk,—



unhappy for Us, but most fortunate for Our Enemies, if Capt. Cunningham & his Crew are to be treated as Pirates, as it will by confirming the reports industriously spread at This Time in England of the Disposition of this Court, confirm the Credit of the Ministry, and by raising the Stocks, eventually procure To Them, the substantial aid of Millions for the next Campaign. The within is a true extract from the accounts we have received from America express, on which I cannot but make one reflection, & wish you to communicate the same, to his Excellency, the Comte de Vergennes. The present Unanimity, & resolution of the United States, is the result of the Confidence which the Congress & people have, that a diversion will this Season be made, by France, or Spain, or both of them in their favor, so as to prevent Gr. Brittain from exerting her whole Force against Them. I confess I have giv'n them grounds for this Confidence, but if they find themselves deceived in their expectations, & that England has sufficient influence, to command the Neutrality & even the Freindship of all Europe, & the actual aid of a part of it, I am very apprehensive for the Consequences. I know my Countrymen well, and that every thing in the power of men in their situation will be done; but it cannot fail of making an impression on them, when they are told, that the Credit of their Enemies is rising, & almost unlimited in Consequence of their Assurances, & as they say, of their Treaties with France, for the continuance of Peace, & even Freindship, while on their part, their independance is unacknowledged, & their overtures for Treaty and Alliance, for open protection & Countenance rejected, or at best neglected. I write to you with the same Freedom, with which I have the honor of Conversing with you, confident you will excuse anything that may appear unreasonable in either. Mr. Lee's setting out his Journey has prevented my waiting on you personally, which I am very impatient for, & shall on Friday, or Saturday next as

may best suit you, do myself that honor, & hope for the Liberty of freely disclosing & discussing what to me, appears to be of the utmost & most pressing importance to both Countries, To France as well as America.

I have the honor to be with the utmost Respect,

Sir your most Obedt &

Very Hum Servt.

S. DEANE.

Rue Royale,

May 14th, 1777.

*Stevens's Facsimiles, Nos. 691, 692, 693.*

#### TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Paris, 20th May, 1777.

SIR,—The Bearer Capt. Hynson has been some time in Paris, & now goes out with a Ship, under his Charge, with Stores for the United States. As he is a Subject of the United States I need not be so particular in recommending him to Your patronage; but must in duty to my Country say, I believe he will render them good Service in their Navy, being a good Seaman, & of a cool, sedate, and Steady Temper of mind. I wish he may arrive safe, & in season, with the important Cargo committed to his Charge, & am with the most perfect respect for Your Excellency and the hon<sup>ble</sup> Congress,

Your Excellency's most Obedt & very Hum<sup>le</sup> Servt.

SILAS DEANE.

His Excellency John Hancock, Esq.

*Stevens's Facsimiles, No. 472.*

#### TO JONATHAN TRUMBULL.

GOVERNOR TRUMBULL,—I have done myself the honor of writing to you several times since my arrival



in France, and flatter myself that my not hearing from you is not owing to anything but the want of the opportunity of a safe conveyance, to remedy which in future a Packet will be despatched monthly hereafter from France to the United States to carry despatches, and any letters sent to the care of Mr. Morris, of Philadelphia, will be forwarded by that way. My situation here is rendered very uneasy thro' the want of regular intelligence, as our enemies are near at hand and have an easy and quiet passage for any needs they choose to propagate, whether true or false, into this Kingdom. Excepting this circumstance and the constant anxiety for my country's fate, I have no cause for dissatisfaction. Persons of all ranks in this Kingdom having taken the part of the United States, Our affairs are everywhere the principal subject of conversation, yet such is the situation of the Finances and Politics of this Kingdom that no openly active part can immediately be taken. Tho' armaments both by Sea and Land are carried on both here and in Spain, and a general war appears inevitable, yet there are many reasons to conclude it may be some months before it actually commences. Great Britain and her allies are exerting themselves to prevent it, and neither money, promises, or any other probable means are omitted by them to keep Europe in its present state. Great Britain in the last war was so much superior to the powers she was at war with, that, tho' they might revenge the disgraces they then met with, they wait to see her weakening before they begin. But what is more immediately wanting is some great and daring statesman, who would look beyond the present moment and above the little intrigues of Interest and Ambition which unhappily employ the politicians of too many of the Courts in Europe.

It seems agreed by all in Europe, as well in England as out of it, that the present campaign must be the last that England can support with any vigor. She can receive no further supplies from Germany,

and the idea of procuring Russians appears ridiculous to every one, and as one campaign can never be sufficient to reduce the Continent, a naval war will be more than ever pressed against us. Heav'n has succeeded our adventures on that Element beyond my most sanguine expectations. I was early, and have ever been, of the opinion that, under God, our Salvation must finally come from vigorous and bold operations at sea, and by carrying the war to their Commerce and factories in distant parts of the Globe. I am impatient to hear in what quarter and with what success the campaign is opened. A letter from you will give me the most sincere pleasure. Please to present my best respects to Col. Dyer and your sons—the elder in particular. I have wrote him and Col. Dyer several letters without receiv<sup>g</sup> any return. They possibly failed in their passage. If I can be servicable to the State under your Government, or to yourself or friends in particular, it will always give me pleasure to be honored with your commands.

I have the honor to be, with the most perfect esteem,

Your Honor's most Obed<sup>t</sup> and most Humb<sup>e</sup> Servt.,  
 SILAS DEANE.

Paris, Rue Royale, Place de Louis XV.,

May 23d, 1777.

*Trumbull Papers, Mass. Hist. Society.*

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FROM BENJAMIN FRANKLIN AND SILAS DEANE.

[No date.—Probably May, 1777.]

To his Excellency, the Count de Vergennes.

SIR,—We have lately received an express from the Congress containing some new instructions to us, the purport of which it is proper your Excellency should be acquainted with, Viz.,

The Congress, tho' firmly determined to maintain as long as possible their Independence, whether as-



sisted or not by any other power, yet, for the sake of humanity, wishing universal peace, they would not, for the advantage of America only, desire to kindle a war in Europe, the extent and duration of which cannot be foreseen. They therefore, as well as for reasons of respect to the King, whose character they venerate, do not presume to propose that France should enter into a war merely on their acc<sup>t</sup>

But if France, to obtain satisfaction from Britain for the injuries received in the last war commenced by that nation in a manner contrary to the law of Nations, or for any other just causes, should think it right to make use of the present occasion in declaring war against Britain, we are directed, to induce if it may be the more easily making of that declaration, to offer the following advantages, in addition to those of Commerce already proposed :

1<sup>st</sup> That the object of the war be to obtain for France satisfaction for the Injuries aforesaid, and for the United States the establishment of their Independence, with a reduction of the British power for the security both of France and America ; to which ends it is proposed that the Conquest of Canada, Nova Scotia, Newfoundland, St. Johns, the Floridas, Bermuda, Bahama, & all the West India Islands now in possession of Britain, be attempted by the joint force of France and United States, &, in case of success, half the Fishery of Newfoundland, together with all the sugar Islands, shall thereafter appertain to France, the rest to the United States, and the trade between the King's dominions and the United States shall thenceforth be carried on by the ships of the said Dominions of France, Spain, & United States only.

That, in case it is agreed that the conquest of the British sugar Islands be attempted, the United States shall, on timely notice, furnish provisions for the Expedition to the amount of 2,000,000 of Dollars, with Six Frigates manned of not less than 24 guns each,

with such other assistance as may be in their power, & as becoming good allies.

That as a close connection is understood to subsist between France & Spain & that their interests are the same, it is also proposed by the Congress that, in case Spain shall enter with France into the said war, the United States if required will declare war with them against Portugal (which has already insulted the commerce of the States) and continue the said war for the total conquest of that Kingdom, to be added to the Dominions of Spain.

That peace shall not be made but by mutual consent. But if it be determined by his most Christian Majesty to remain in peace with Britain, The Congress do then pray that his majesty would be pleased to use his influence in Europe for preventing the farther transportation of Foreign troops into America, to serve against the United States, and to obtain a recall of those already there, and having an unbounded confidence in the King's goodness & wisdom, they pray his advice in their present circumstances, whether to apply to any of the other powers of Europe for auxiliary aids, or to make offers of peace to Britain on conditions of their Independence being acknowledged. In neither of these points would the Congress take a step without consulting his Majesty's Ministers, and we hope for a favourable answer.

*Lee Papers, Harvard University.*

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TO CAPT. JOSEPH HYNSON.

CAPT. HYNSON.

SIR,—You will receive herewith Letters for Mr. Eyries, &c., at Havre Du Grace, which on your arrival deliver. If the Anonyme is gone you will loose no Time in following her to Nantes, and on your going on board take a Careful Inventory of her Stores, inquire her Age, & ascertain her just Value, which you



are immediately to send me an account of, leaving the Copy of the Letter you may write with Mr. Williams, of Nantes, that he may forward a duplicate of it to me in case the original fail. Mr. Williams will procure a Cargo for the Anonyme, in which you will embark as a passenger for the West Indies, to which she must appear to be destin'd, but before you sail the Capt<sup>n</sup>. must sign Orders to be directed by you in everything. You will stand as far North as to fall in with Portsmouth in New Hampshire, if possible, & make the first safe port to the East of Rhode Island, unless by speaking with any American or others you receive advice to the Contrary. You are to be very cautious who you speak to at Sea, & avoid speaking with them if possible. Should you be drove off the New England Coast, either by Contrary Winds or the Enemy, advise you to endeavor for North or South Carolina, & on your arrival, deliver the Letters given you to the persons to whom they are directed, and attend their Orders. Wishing you all possible Success,

I am, Sir, your most obed<sup>t</sup>. & very humble Serv<sup>t</sup>.,

SILAS DEANE.

Paris, 1st June, 1777.

P.S. You are to be particularly careful that no Letters, or papers, fall into the hands of the Enemy, to prevent which keep the whole always ready for sinking in Case of Accident. Your Journey being altered for Nantes, you will attend the above Instructions, excepting what relates immediately to Havre.

To Capt. Joseph Hynson.

*Stevens's Facsimiles, No. 167.*

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TO CONRAD A. GERARD.

DEAR SIR,—I had the honor of writing you yesterday respecting Capt. Adams, of Boston, whose vessel was sunk on the coast of Bell Isle by an English man

of War, since which I have received intelligence that Three 74 Gun Ships & one 64 are sailed, to cruise in the Bay of Biscay; their Names are the Hector, Essex, Egmont & Exeter. Permit me to remind you, that from what you did me the honor of telling me sometime since, I was pleased with the hopes of seeing a Fleet at Sea sufficient to check the insolence of Our Enemies, & even to make some diversion in favor of Our Commerce; may I still hope for it? Or am I to see the reverse? To see the Enemies of America (and God knows they are not the Friends of France) extend themselves the whole length of your Coast, intercept a Commerce equally beneficial to both Countries, and to detain & even make prize of Vessels belonging to the Subjects of France, only because they were supposed to have Stores on board for America,—which is the case with the Seine now detained in Dominica—forgive me, Sir, I will trouble you no farther, but must ask an Opportunity of waiting on his Excellency, to represent to him, in the true Light, many things which are of the last importance, and the situation and appearance of which give me more inquietude than it is in the power of Language to express. I have the honor to remain with the utmost respect,

Sir, your most Obed<sup>t</sup>.

& very Hum. Serv<sup>t</sup>.,

S. DEANE.

Paris, 2d June, 1777.

P. S. Since writing the foregoing, I have seen a Capt<sup>n</sup>. from Nantes, an American, who says that Cap<sup>t</sup>. Adams was chased by an English Man of War. That finding he could not escape, he attempted to run his Vessel on Shore, but the Man of War got between him & the Land, & took him within very small distance from Shore, & the report was, that taking out the People he sunk her. Letters from London mention the Same thing, so that I have no doubt of



the Truth of it. Capt<sup>n</sup>. Johnson, going out of Bordeaux, was chased before he was out of sight of the Tower, but escaped. I have seen Mr. Grand this Moment, who has greatly alarmed me; he says that his Excellency told him to tell me that I had been ill-advised, & was betrayed, but did not inform me in what. With respect to the Cutter at Dunkirk, I mean that last purchased, in which individuals are interested, I can only say that I advised my Freinds to get her away as quick & as silently as possible, & to stand directly of the Coast, & on no Consideration permit her to return to France or near Any of its Ports. If I shall be instructed to give better advice, I shall most readily do it, & I doubt not my advice will be attended to, but the Owners have already expended Two Thousand pounds Sterling in the purchase and repairs, which they cannot afford to loose. I hoped farther that Cap<sup>t</sup>. Cunningham & his People might get a passage in her to their Own Country, where they might be useful. I hope at least they may be dismissed from Prison, & be permitted to depart in such manner as they can, though if they disperse, there will be danger of their not returning, & consequently of Our loosing a number of brave and honest Subjects. I can only add, that I am ready to follow most exactly the advice which shall be given me on this & every other Occasion by his Excellency, but am at an uncertainty what to do untill more expliscitly informed.

*Stevens's Facsimiles, No. 697.*

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FROM JOHN ROSS.

DEAR SIR,—Since I came here had the pleasure of both your favours of 21<sup>st</sup> & 24 ult<sup>o</sup>. The former covered a letter for Cap<sup>n</sup> Wickes, which I dispatched immediately by an express Boat (hyred at 9 Livres), and reached in time, having received a few lines acknowledging receipt thereof. Those vessels put to Sea

Wednesday morning last week ; hope something favourable may soon be heard of them. The latter accompanying copie of a letter received by you from Bourdeaux I have considered and perused with attention, yet at a loss what to say respecting an affair of so much abuse & mismanagement in those intrusted with a property for the dispatch of Cleveland.

I had not the least doubt of being able to advise you much sooner of the state of business [that] brought me hither. Sorry, however, not to have it in my power, and much affraid I shall have nothing favourable to communicate when thorowly acquainted with the whole. The order in which I found several matters of inquiry lead me to apprehend the worst. I wish it may turn out otherwise when a regular Settlement is exhibited in a Set of books only begun since I came here, in consequence of a possitive declaration of executing the orders am possessed of to the utmost. I wished to avoid the delivery of the letter I had for him [Thomas Morris] from his Brother, cou'd I obtain some knowledge of his management & proofs of no abuse ; but strong hints being given me that our friend was under no obligation to satisfye any person, I was compelled to disclose my power's, communicating my Sentiments freely on the subject.

I could not meet him since receipt of yours these three days, tho frequently at his Compting house, to obtain some information of M<sup>r</sup>. Merckle's concerns with him. As soon as I see him & get some conversation about this affair, shall write you in course. Captain Cleveland shoud be dispatched, too much property being already sacrified ; but I think the thoughts of ordering him here to take in a part of his Cargo must be attended with too much risque, & ought to be laid asside. A Cargo may be compleated at Bourdeaux with Salt, much wanted in the middle Colonys, of no great vallue, & will render profit in case it gets safe, to indemnify the heavy expence incurred on the Vessel by the ruinous management of the people con-



cerned. The merchandize provided by Meirkle (except as farr as the vallue of the Cargo brought with him), it appears, are kept back for want of funds. If those goods are actually provided on good terms, and there ready to be put on board, Some mode of payment might be adopted rather than lose the oppt'y of sending them. Cou'd my personal presence prove of use to expedite a proper Settlement of this wretched business for the dispatch of the Vessels, shoud not begrudge my trouble. Hope it may be mannaged without me, as circumstances will admit, under your directions, by those of your Friends there. If am able to obtain some more insight into this transaction, & that an Invoice of the goods are furnished to the Agent here, shall be more particular in my next.

What appologie may be urged in vindicating a neglect of the payment of bills under acceptance cannot be comprehended by me ; this is a most dishonest & disreputable act in a Merchant, & must hurt all his future business. There will certainly be a necessity to change the measures of all the Agents & contractors at present in this kingdom in the commercial Line, without any kind of ceremony. Some of these connections are by no means reputable, & stand in the way (mere Straglers, destitute of money & Friends to fulfill their engagements) of those of Credit & Consequence, who are discouraged from rendering assistance or being usefull—Indeed, with much propriety, when they see the business in such hands, fit only for employers of equal Credit & consequence with themselves. I shall not depart hence (however disagreeable the task), previous to the settlement of a more reputable mode of Mannagement, knowing our Phil. Friend [Robert Morris] will expect it, & if any difficultys are thrown in the way, your assistance I shall depend on to Effect it. Having formed this resolution, have setled a plan to have my own concerns in another quarter conducted with dispatch. My Agents will pay attention to the Execution of my orders, and doubt not

with equal care as if I had been on the spot ; such is the advantage of forming reputable connections of Credit, consequence, & Character.

The Manufactories furnished hitherto here are of a very inferior quality & extravagantly dear. The low-priced Woolens, in particular, calculate for our demand 30 to 50 pr. Cent. hygher priced than what are to be come at in Germany. There is a very easey mode of avoiding this imposition over here, had it been attended to by those who are employed ; but ignorance & folly must prevail as the most Characteristical, and more usefull considerations totally neglected.

I wish much to see the new appointed Agent [William Lee], flattering myself he is a man of business & attention ; if so, a new beneficial arrangement may easily be adopted with much advantage to the constituents, tending much to the dispatch of Vessels so justly complained of by all concerned, known to the sacrifice & abuse of the Interest in that allone. I am, with particular respect & Esteem,

Dear Sir,

Your most obed<sup>t</sup> Servt<sup>t</sup>,

J. Ross.

Nantes, 2<sup>d</sup> June, 1777.

To Silas Deane, Esq.

Please my Compliments to Do<sup>r</sup> Franklin.

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO CHARLES W. F. DUMAS.

Extract of a letter dated Paris, June 7, 1777.

I understand that the British ministers' emissaries are very busy in Holland propagating reports of an accommodation between the congress and Great Britain. They are playing the same game here. I have long since been convinced that there is no action too atrocious for them to attempt, and any report too ridiculous and improbable for them to propagate to



serve their purposes. The last authentic intelligence from congress, or from New York, was about the 10th of April, when there was not the least prospect of any accommodation. The sole overture that had been made was a hint, as I may say, from General Lee, that lord and general Howe wished to renew a conference with the congress, and to open a treaty; to which the congress replied that they would neither confer nor treat till their independence should be acknowledged. You will therefore see at once how very little ground there is for such kind of assertions. My dear sir, I have seen such strange and unexpected events, as well as being witness to such extraordinary conduct, that I am almost beyond being surprised at any thing; yet, should an accommodation take place between those contending nations whilst the congress have the least prospect of foreign succour and support, I confess I shall be greatly surprised; but if the British ministry, as they roundly assert, are assured that no power in Europe will countenance the United States in their independence, and if they can bring the congress to believe the same, who will be surprised if they make terms, and accommodate rather than to hazard longer a contest with the most formidable power in Europe and its allies, without prospect on their part of aid and support? I say, who will be surprised, or, rather, who will not be surprised, should they still persist in continuing the war unsupported? However, I, who know my countrymen perfectly, and the principles by which they are actuated, do not believe they will ever accommodate on terms lower than independence; yet, in the same situation, and with the same offers made them, I am certain any other people in the world would accommodate. You are not to impute what I say to vanity. I am not raising my countrymen above every other nation in the world; far from it; but they are a new people, and have certain notions that are either new in the world or have been so long unpractised upon and unheard of, except

in the speculations of philosophers, that it is difficult, perhaps impossible, to compare them with any other nation. Unprejudiced reason and plain common sense will enable the few to judge, but the many, the ninety-nine of every hundred at least, will determine as usual by the event. I am not fond of bold assertions or predictions, but I dare hazard my credit upon it that either no accommodation will on any terms take place, or, if it does, a war in Europe will be the immediate consequence. And I submit it to the consideration of those ministers and politicians who are afraid to offend Great Britain now, whilst America alone employs more than her whole natural force, how they will be able to contend with her when at peace and on good terms, perhaps in alliance with America. Universal monarchy has at many periods been feared from the House of Bourbon, and England has been exhausted to prevent it; has engaged allies pretendedly to keep the balance of power in Europe, as it is ridiculously and unintelligibly termed by European politicians; but you will permit an American to give his sentiments; they may at least divert and make you smile. From the period when the feudal system prevailed over all Europe, when every lord was a sovereign, to this hour, the number of kingdoms or distinct powers in Europe have been decreasing in number; and if we look three centuries back and reckon up the distinct powers then existing, and compare it with the present and extend our view forward, the whole must at some not very distant period be brought into one; for not an age passes, and scarce a single war, without annihilating or swallowing up several of them. But from what quarter is this universal empire in Europe to originate? I answer negatively: not from the House of Bourbon, though formidable for its connections and alliances in the south; but I will venture to predict that if Great Britain, by forming an accommodation of friendship and alliance with the United States, renders herself, as by that measure she easily



can, mistress of the world. By taking the affairs of the East Indies into her own hands, she will be in possession of exhaustless treasure; and in 1780 the charter of the East India company expires, when both the territory and commerce will be at her disposal. And when you add to all this her strict and close alliance with Russia—I say, that, laying these circumstances together, it is easy to foresee that Great Britain, America, and Russia united will command not barely Europe, but the whole world united. Russia, like America, is a new state, and rises with the most astonishing rapidity. Its demand for British manufactures and its supplies of raw materials increase nearly as fast as the American, and when both come to centre in Great Britain, the riches as well as power of that Kingdom will be unparalleled in the annals of Europe, or perhaps of the world. Like a Colossus, with one foot on Russia and the East and the other on America, it will bestride, as Shakspeare says, your poor European world, and the powers which now strut and look big will creep about between its legs to find dishonourable graves. I dare say you smile at my prophecy, but you will observe it is a conditional one, and I am persuaded, like most other prophets, will neither be believed nor understood until verified by the event, which at the same time I am labouring like my good predecessors of old (who prophesied grievous things) to prevent taking place if possible, for it is my ultimate and early wish that America may forever be as unconnected with the politics or interests of Europe as it is by nature situated distant from it, and that the friendly ties arising from a free, friendly, and independent commerce may be the only ties between us. If not in quality, you have in quantity a large payment in this towards the debt I owe you in correspondence. My compliments to your good lady. Adieu.

S. DEANE.

M. Dumas.

## TO COUNT DE VERGENNES.

SIR,—I have conferred with Doct<sup>r</sup> Franklin on the subject of the old Brass, which I had the honor of speaking with your Excellency about, & We have agreed to employ Mr. Grand to procure for Us Three Hundred Thousand lbs., if so much can be procured. It is of great importance to Us to have it shipp'd as soon as possible, & We have now Vessels at Bourdeaux & at Nantes ready to receive it. It may be sent with all Safety by the way of Martinico, & thence in Armed Vessels to the Continent, where, when manufactured, it will furnish a very great supply. We most earnestly intreat your Excellency to assist Us with the Article.

I have the honor to remain, with the most profound respect,

Your Excellency's most Obed<sup>t</sup> & most Hum<sup>le</sup> Serv<sup>t</sup>,  
SILAS DEANE.

Paris, 9th June, 1777.

To his Excellency, The Count de Vergennes,  
Minister & Secretary of State, &c.

*Stevens's Facsimiles, No. 698.*

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FROM BENJAMIN FRANKLIN.

DEAR SIR,—M. Chaumont advises to equip Capt. Wickes at St. Malo, where he can be furnis'd with Cannon, Cordage, Sailcloth, Salt, Anchors, and other things proper to carry to America; and may go directly from thence without the double Risque of a Coasting Voyage to take in such things at another Port. He has obtain'd a Letter of Recommendation to M. Beaugeard, a Merchant of Importance there, who can supply those things, and who, being well with the Commissary, is desired to procure for our Vessels the necessary time to load & equip. If you approve



of this, the Express can carry the necessary Orders.  
I am ever

Yours affectionately,

B. F.

Friday morn<sup>g</sup>,  
June 10, '77.

*Deane Papers, Treasury Department.*

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TO JONATHAN WILLIAMS.

Paris, June 12<sup>th</sup>, 1777.

M<sup>r</sup>. WILLIAMS. SIR,—The Bearer [John Reed] goes to Nantes with the View of getting a Convenient Place for Learning the French Language. He brought dispatches to the Comm<sup>rs</sup> from Congress, & is particularly recommended to me by M<sup>r</sup>. Reed, of Philadelphia, Adjutant-General in the Continental Army, who is his Brother-in-Law. I hope you will find him some place, properly situated & retired, where he may without interruption pursue his Studies in the French Language. He has a Letter from M<sup>r</sup>. Bayard to M<sup>r</sup>. Rumsey for a Credit of Fifty pounds, which He will shew you. As M<sup>r</sup>. Rumsey is absent, I will answer the Bill in case M<sup>r</sup>. Reed shall want it, as he probably will. General Reed is a man of great worth and my particular Friend, which induces me, though a stranger to the Bearer, M<sup>r</sup>. Jn<sup>o</sup>. Reed, to recommend him the more warmly to your kind offices.

I am most sincerely yours, &c.,

S. DEANE.

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO CONRAD A. GERARD.

Mr. Deane has received Letters from Dunkirk informing that Capt. Cunningham & his Sailors were still detained in prison, & that on the 10th instant no Orders were received for their discharge, & that

some of them were suffering in their health. Mr. Deane prays that Orders may (if not already sent) be given for their being discharged.

By the same Letter he is informed that a Vessel bound to Martinico with Stores, for which he long since contracted, was detained in the port of Dunkirk, which, after other disappointments, may produce the most fatal Consequences; he therefore prays that some method may be pointed out for his conveying them to the place of their Destination.

Mr. Deane is informed that a Duty is demanded on Cloaths ready-made when exported from France, which he was not apprized of when the Contract was made for a large quantity. There is no duty, as he is informed, on the exportation of the Cloth unmade; but, having engaged for the making them, & employed the Workmen, a heavy expence will fall upon him unless the Duty can in this instance be dispensed with; which he prays may be done, & that Orders may be given on that Subject. The Cloaths will be exported from Bordeaux & Nantes.

Versailles, 14th June, 1777.

*Stevens's Facsimiles, No. 700.*

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FROM JOHN ROSS.

Nantes, 17th June, 1777.

DEAR SIR,—Confirming & referring you to my last, without any of yours since. The intent of this is to inform you that in an account rendered by Mr. Gruel against congress, there appears sundry charges as follows, viz.:

|          |                                                                                    |                           |
|----------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Feb. 78. | To sundry expenses, &c., with<br>cash paid Doctr Franklin<br>and to his order..... | £ <sup>s</sup> 4965..0..6 |
| Mar. 4.  | To paid by Mr. Sollier, of Paris,<br>to Messrs. Franklin D: & L.                   | 36606                     |



|          |                                           |       |
|----------|-------------------------------------------|-------|
| June 14. | To my remit of 22d Feb <sup>ry</sup> last |       |
|          | to Mr. Sollier                            |       |
|          | at Paris, by order of Mr. Th:             |       |
|          | Morris, for acct.                         |       |
|          | of Messrs. Franklin, Deane,               |       |
|          | & Lee.....                                | 90450 |
| “ “      | To sundry advances to Mr.                 |       |
|          | Williams since 19th January               |       |
|          | last.....                                 | 3360  |

In all, £<sup>s</sup>135'381..17..6 French money, chargeable to the commissioners. Youl please observe, all the business (respecting sales, purchases, and advances) of Messrs. T: Morris & Pliarne, Penet & Co., have hitherto been executed here by Mr. Gruel, who keeps an open acct. with congress. And not having receipts for the advances made to & by order of Mr. Franklin (except for the advances to Mr. Williams), I obtained the particulars of the first charge, Copy of which accompanys this for Mr. Franklin's peruseal. Be pleased, therefore, to advise me in course if all the charges made to and by order of the commissioners are right or not, to serve for my government in the settlement under my direction at present, and I am, with particular respect, Dear Sir,

Yours sincerely,

J<sup>no</sup> Ross.

N. B. Under date 8 Feb<sup>ry</sup>,  
fr. proceeds and sale 35 cask indigo are  
credited in acct. of Congress, £<sup>s</sup>41'571..17..6.  
Silas Deane, Esq.

*Lee Papers, Harvard University.*

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WILLIAM CARMICHAEL TO CHARLES W. F. DUMAS.

Paris, June 20, 1777.

We have had no arrivals since I had the pleasure of writing to you last, nor news but what comes by the

way of England. The friends of government magnify, as usual, their advantages. You will see how impossible it is to guard all our extensive coast from incursions similar to that in Connecticut, yet I believe the reception they met with, and their narrow escape from total destruction, will sicken them of frequent trials of the same nature. The enemy begin, at length, to do justice to the bravery of our countrymen, and own that experienced commanders alone were wanting to have cut off their retreat. On our side we had only 260 continental troops in the action, the rest were militia, hastily assembled. It is very remarkable that hitherto the parts of the country where the King had most friends have most suffered. New York, that loyal city, is half ruined, while Boston, that seat of d——d republicanism, as the courtiers stile it, grows rich by the war. Norfolk, in Virginia, contained more tories than the whole province beside. Norfolk is no more. The Jerseys, where Howe boasted his numerous partizans, is now a desolated country. The last towns destroyed by British fury were the only two in the province which dissented from the resolutions of Congress. The visit of their *friends* has proved fatal. Many of the Americans killed had Howe's protections in their pockets. General Wooster's son was killed defending his father's body, having repeatedly refused proffered quarter. Seven of the country people, shut up in a house from which they greatly annoyed the enemy, were surrounded, offered quarter, but chose rather to perish in the flames than take it. Two fine young fellows, volunteers, of my acquaintance, fell as I wish to fall. Young men of fortune, they acted as private men that day. Arnold, having one horse killed under him before he mounted another, fired his pistols, and then rode off to rally his men to another charge. You may judge what warm work the enemy had by the quantity of cartridge used—sixty rounds—and by the march they made. It will be well to dress up these little circumstances for our



good friends of Leyden, and the courier of the Bas-Rhine.

You have seen a letter, said to be wrote by a Lieut.-Col. Campbell, bitterly complaining of his cruel confinement. It is a forgery. A junto of refugees from various parts of the continent, who meet weekly in Pall-Mall, London, do this dirty work of government to earn the pittance but scantily afforded to each of them. At the head of this junto were Hutchinson, Cooper, Chandler, Vassel, and others who would not be named but for their infamy. They have forged letters lately under the name of Gen. Washington, which the good, silly souls of Europe will swallow as genuine, unless contradicted in different gazettes. In a New-York paper, published under the authority of general Howe, I saw an advertisement offering counterfeit continental currency to any one who would apply. This is one way of distressing an enemy which was left to the ingenuity of our enemies to invent. Dr. Franklin mentions that it was badly counterfeited, or they would not have had the generosity to give it away. Mr. D. is not in town. As far as I can learn from America, the enemy have adopted another mode of conduct—they treat their prisoners more humanely with a view, no doubt, of not exasperating a people too much, whom, if they do not conquer this summer, they mean to be united to in another way than formerly, by withdrawing their claims and acknowledging their independence. Your European friends ought to foresee the probability of this, but they will not. They ought to remember we were forced into independence, and did not seek it; that many only came into the measure from necessity, not from inclination. The death of the present King of England and a change of ministers might deprive France of an opportunity, the most glorious ever afforded her, of rising on the ruins of her rival. She has done enough to excite resentment, and not enough to secure gratitude. But, “surdis loquor.” Adieu! my dear sir. We have one

thing left to comfort us, which is, if we secure our freedom we shall owe it to ourselves only.

I am, dear sir,

Yours, most sincerely,

W. CARMICHAEL.

Mr. Dumas.

*The Port Folio, Vol. III., 381, Nov. 26, 1803.*

TO CAPT. JOSEPH HYNSON.

Paris, June 28th, 1777.

CAPTAIN HYNSON.

SIR,—I rec<sup>d</sup> yours of the 14th at Rouen, and went immediately to Havre, whence I wrote Mr. Williams. I this day rec<sup>d</sup> yours of the 24th. Eyries has charged Montieu Thirty six Thousand Livres, as the latter assures me, for the repairs of that Vessel, which, compared with your Estimate of her & other Circumstances, determines me to have nothing further to do with her on any Terms whatever. I am sorry for the fresh Delay which this must Occasion; but, from the Character you give of the Vessel, It must be best to have nothing further to do with her on any Terms. It is much better to have nothing sent than to send over so much exposed to capture, & under such circumstances. I have wrote to Mr. Williams on the Subject, & refer you to him for your directions. I wish to God you had a good Privateer in the Channel. I am Confident you would purchase both Vessels & Cargoes at a much better rate than what I am obliged to Treat for them. I am, wishing you much Success, with due Esteem,

Sir, your most Obed<sup>t</sup> & Very Hum<sup>ble</sup> Serv<sup>t</sup>,

S. DEANE.

Capt. Joseph Hynson.

*Stevens's Facsimiles, No. 174.*



FROM ROBERT MORRIS.

Philadelphia, June 29<sup>th</sup>, 1777.

DEAR SIR,—I have receiv'd by Mons<sup>r</sup> du Coudray your Letter of the 4<sup>th</sup> Decem<sup>r</sup> addressed to me, but having met with an accident [it] was delivered open. Your Letter of the 5<sup>th</sup> Jan'y, addressed to my House, Willing Morris & C<sup>o</sup>, arrived only about ten days since, being forwarded from Charles Town, in South Carolina, by Captain Roche. These are the only Private Letters come to my hands; but there are several recommendatory Letters in favour of the many officers come out under your Auspices. I will reply to the Contents of the two first. The many Letters I have written to you must have been exceedingly unfortunate in their Passages to you, as well as yours to me, or you would have had little cause to complain for want of Intelligence, as I never let a month pass all last Fall and Winter without writing, and some times wrote two or three within the month; but feeling the difficultys you were exposed to, you seem to have attributed them to a wrong cause, Silence on our part, instead of those accidents to which our Letters are exposed after written. Sure I am that all the Congress together, nor any one Man in America, has been at the Pains to give you intelligence that I have, and sorry I am that my Letters have not had better success.

With respect to my Brother, I shall deal very Candidly with you by declaring to you that I never was more shocked and hurt by any Incident in my Life than at the manner in which you, Gentlemen Commissioners at the Court of France, have been pleased to mention him in Public Letters that you knew must be laid before Congress. These Letters arrived long before I had a scrip [scrape] of a Pen from you on the subject. It occurred to me instantly that I had unbosomed myself to you respecting him; that I had Solicited your Friendship in his favour, and asked you to inform me fully and freely of his Conduct; that to

all this I never had a word in answer, and found your name at the bottom of Letters blasting his Character in the most Public manner, and exposing me to feelings the most Poignant I ever knew. It also occurred to me that I had Solicited Doctor Franklin to admonish and advise him if he found it necessary, and to shew him Countenance if he proved deserving. From these Circumstances I really did expect that any Complaints he merited would have been made to myself in Private Letters, giving me account of his Conduct, and if it was necessary to remove him from his employment, I could have done that, so as to prevent any the least disservice to the Public, or his being unnecessarily exposed. You will see that these sentiments were strong in my mind when I wrote the Commissioners the 1<sup>st</sup> April, and they made so strong an impression on me at the time your Letters were read in Congress, that I got up Instantly, gave my Brother his true Character; complained of his being so publicly exposed; told what my desires and expectations from you were, and added, that by my Letters to you by Captain Bell, I had put him in your Power either to be Confirmed in his Employment or dismissed from it, as his Conduct might require. I think the Letter I wrote you by Captain Bell respecting him must have Convinced you that I did not wish him employed in the Public Service if he did not deserve it. It must also Convince you that a Public Letter to Congress was not necessary to procure his removal if his Conduct was not right, for you found me as ready to displace him as you could wish, and I begin to fear that I was rather too forward in it. From what I now write, you may naturally conclude I do not think myself in the least degree beholden to Doctor Franklin or you for your Conduct towards this young Man, and in plain truth I do not; however, I do not Cherish resentment, and hope my Passion may be always subdued by reason, and my reason influenced by good Principles; therefore, I mean nothing more than to let you know that



I think those public Letters were Cruel to my Brother and extremely unfriendly to myself. I shall inform him of them, and if he has spirit to resent them, I hope he will also have Judgement to do it properly. Perhaps I have flattered myself with the expectation of more Friendship from the Doctor and you than I had a right to, and shall therefore Correct the Error in future. Thus much for what you say of him in Public. As to what you write me of him in those Letters of the 4<sup>th</sup> Dec<sup>r</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Jan'y, now before me, I thank you most sincerely for it, and should do so had the account of him been ten times more disagreeable. It is bad enough, God knows, and what is worse, I believe he deserves every tittle of it. Had these Letters of yours reached me before the Public Letters, I should in some degree have been prepared, and probably should not have said any thing about him in Congress; but even in that case I should have thought in the same way of your Public Letters, because I think it was totally unnecessary to mention him there. You refer me to M<sup>r</sup> Bromfield for further particulars and anecdotes respecting this youth, and M<sup>r</sup> Bromfield has kindly referred me to all the Gentlemen from Virginia, where he landed; to South Carolina, where he has gone by Land, and has industriously communicated these particulars and anecdotes to every body he met with. I must now in turn inform you of some particulars and anecdotes that Gentlemen from Nantes have lately informed me of. They say that since Tom's arrival there he had applied himself most assiduously and closely to business. This appears to be true, because he has done his business well, and has given a most clear and satisfactory account of it. I laid his Letters before Congress in order that they might judge for themselves, and assure you that many Members differ from The Honorable Commissioners, and did not seem to think that he ought to be *Immediately removed from his Commercial Employment*. These same Gentlemen from Nantes inform me that

that employment is sought for by others whom the Commissioners wish to Gratify at his expence; that M<sup>r</sup> Williams and others envy him, and that relatives and Interested motives are united to remove my Brother and make way for a Nephew, a Couzin and a Partner. I am not fond of believing these storys, and yet there are many Circumstances with them that stagger my want of faith; however, the principal foundation for me to act upon is wanting. If my Brother's Conduct had been such as to inspire me with perfect Confidence, all the Commissioners at Paris should not remove him, but as he has not done that, I had rather any Man's Nephew, Couzin, or Partner had the employment than that my Brother should give just cause for a single Complaint; therefore, if you have removed him I shall acquiesce and trouble you or myself no farther about the matter; and having no views or designs but what I can Justify, you see I dont hide from you my sentiments on any one point, but you will enter into the distinction I make, and think yourself justly entitled to my thanks for the accounts given to myself of this same troublesome Brother of mine, and I shall ever acknowledge that favour. I anxiously wish to hear what you have done with him in Consequence of my Letter by Captain Bell, for untill I know that, or learn what has been his line of Conduct since that time, I am and shall be much embarrassed how to direct the affairs that have been Committed to his Management. I would wish to indulge the fond hope that he will see his Folly with an Eye of Judgment and take up another Conduct that will give him Character and Consequence in the World. On these terms, and no other, do I wish to serve him; and I do assure you, upon my honour, if your Letter respecting him had been confined to myself, instead of being offended, you would have experienced the most unbounded acknowledgements and the most grateful returns for your Candour, and even now I shall not suffer the feelings occasioned by the public Letters to



stifle what is due to you for the pains you did take to put him right.

And now for the Commercial Affairs depending between us, I am not surprized that my Brother's Conduct in London should have hurt the Credit and reputation of our House, because a good deal of pains had been taken, and even Ministerial influence used (as I am well informed), to do that previous to his arrival, and there is no doubt but his Irregularitys furnished fresh Materials; however, I disregard all this, as I shall honorably fulfill all my engagements in that Country, and wish I could say that every one there had done so by me, but probably the day may come when some that rank high in the Commercial World may blush at the recital of their Conduct. You say the American Credit, both Public and Private, was in a most wretched state. I doubt it not in the least; indeed, I always expected it would be so, and am now as well as then Convinced that General Washington must be the great Banker to establish our Credit with the Banks and Bankers of Europe, and this I believe he will be able to do, at least appearances are more favourable now than ever, and I have not despaired at any time. You tell me you have engaged on your and my account one hundred thousand Livres Interest in the Cargo of the Union, Cap<sup>t</sup> La Roche, Consigned to M<sup>r</sup> Bromfield, for which remittances must be punctually made. This Vessell is arrived safe at Charles Town, in South Carolina, where the Captain was selling the Cargo at a Considerable advance. M<sup>r</sup> Bromfield left that Ship at Cape Francois and came to Virginia in a small Sloop, from whence he set out by Land for Carolina. You seem to rely much on this Gentleman's prudence, but I have conceived a very different opinion of it, for he has not only done what I have already mentioned respecting my Brother, but he has told to every body the Concern you and I had in the Union's Cargo, with many Circumstances that I knew little about.

Collonel Harrison, who happened to be in Virginia when he arrived, says the People in that Country are acquainted with the whole concern, and from hence it is not improbable but they may conjecture by & by that Private gain is more our pursuit than Public Good, for such unworthy suspicions are frequently taken up on less Grounds ; however, I shall continue to discharge my duty faithfully to the Public, and pursue my Private Fortune by all such honorable and fair means as the times will admit of, and I dare say you will do the same, but we are not much indebted to M<sup>r</sup> Bromfield's discretion, neither can I think myself under any great obligation for a Credit so limited and guarded as this Cargo by the Union seems to be. Captain La Roche writes for my opinion and advice, but takes care to let me know he is to remit the entire Neat Proceeds to his owner, Mons<sup>r</sup> La Ray du Chaumont ; now, altho' I have no real objection to his doing so, yet it carries an air of distrust that I dislike. Enclosed you will find Copys of what I wrote M<sup>r</sup> Bromfield in answer to his Letter from Virginia, before I knew how very Communicative he was ; also copy of what I wrote Cap<sup>t</sup> La Roche, by which you'll see I offer to pay him for your and my part the Cost of the Cargo in good Bills of Exchange, and receive our share of the Neat Proceeds, rather than Consent to his shipping back Indigo on our account. That article is very dear, and I know must entail a heavy loss on us—whereas if the remittances are confined to Rice, Tobacco, Furs, Skins, Flour, &c., a handsome Proffit will result from what does arrive safe, and if he will wait to make returns in these articles, I have no objection to the whole going back, as I have no inclination or occasion to finger any of the money arriving from the sales of this Cargo ; therefore it was quite unnecessary to be so guarded against its coming into my hands. In short, I shall rest satisfied with this Concern, because I have run my share of the Risque ; but there is a Certain degree of indignity in the terms that



I will not submit to again, to hold an Interest in a Cargo addressed to a Captain and Super Cargo, with orders for them to have the whole management, receive the Commissions, and remit the intire Neat Proceeds back, so that had they come here I must have had the trouble, be their adviser, and looked on whilst they carried back my share to France, altho' I was ready to pay down the Cost. This will never do, and I desire not any further concern on such terms, therefore I will not give you any more trouble about Interesting me in Commercial matters; in what is done on our joint account previous to the receipt of this Letter, I hold myself bound and will make good my part of the engagements, but I suppose this Cargo of the Union's will be the only one shipped. If Captain Roche accepts my offer and delivers up your proportion and mine of the Neat Proceeds on my paying him good Bills for £<sup>s</sup>100,000, I will comply with it, and in that case the Surplus or Proffit on your share shall be remitted to M<sup>rs</sup> Dean as you direct; on the contrary, if the intire returns for this Cargo are made to France, you will see the final settlement of the account, and I beg that my share of the Proffits may be paid to M<sup>r</sup> John Ross, of this City, now in Europe, whose address you will be acquainted with no doubt; and should the remittances from America be taken or fail of making intire payment for the first cost of the Union's Cargo, I will desire M<sup>r</sup> Ross in such case to pay whatever ballance may become due on the proportion of £<sup>s</sup>50,000.

Notwithstanding what I have said above respecting future Concerns, I should have no objection provided they were to come on such a footing as is Consistent with that Credit and Character I am entitled to; but on no other. The Cargoes should be Consigned to me or my order, and the Captains be directed to get into the first safe Port they can make. I have the best Correspondents at every Port on this Continent, who can sell the Cargoes and make remittances to much

better advantage than any Super Cargo, for these always do much mischief to Trade in General, as well as to their own particular Voyages. Goods continue in great demand, and if Insurances could be obtained in Europe, great Fortunes might be made with Certainty. On the above terms I am willing to be farther Concerned, but not on any others.

Your Letter of the 3<sup>d</sup> Decem<sup>r</sup>, to Mess<sup>rs</sup> Alsop, Livingston, Lewis and myself, came also by Mons<sup>r</sup>. du Coudray, and I need only tell you, in answer, that many vessells were taken that were Loaded on account of that Contract, and General Washington unloaded several that were Laden in New York for the same purpose, therefore it appeared evidently you never could receive the remittance of £100,000 Sterling from the money allotted to make you that remittance, and for this reason the ballance that remained was thrown back into the Secret Committee, and they gave orders to the Commercial Agents to supply you with what you fell short of the £40,000 Sterling after you had received all the remittances the Contractors had made you. This was putting you on the surest footing, because the Committee keep constantly shipping, and the Contractors could only have gone to the end of the money advanced, one-half of which had been stopped early by Friends & Foes, as above mentioned. We are so Cursedly hampered with their numerous Cruizers along our Coast that remittances are precarious and very difficult to be got out, therefore I hope you will negotiate Loans of Money in Europe, on such terms as will give us time to look round and make remittances to the best advantage and with the greatest security that can be. However, I must refer you to Public Letters for this and other subjects, being,

Dear Sir,

Your Obed<sup>t</sup> h<sup>ble</sup> Servant,

ROBT MORRIS.

The Honorable Silas Deane. Esq<sup>r</sup>,  
at Paris.

*Thomas Mss.*



FROM WILLIAM CARMICHAEL.

GENTLEMEN,—I arrivd here this morning with a determination to comply with your orders & not to suffer Cap<sup>m</sup> Cunningham to sail but as a merchant vessel returning with merchantable property to his own country. I found the parties concernd Disposd, of themselves, to comply with this disposition, heartily sick of having ever attempted other projects & resolved for the future to seek other scenes of action, where they might more effectually serve themselves & Country. From doing this they are prevented by an order from Court, which disables them from sailing unless they give security not only that they shall not make prizes in the present voyage, tho' they should do it in consequence of being attackd by the Enemy, but such is the tenor of the order (as I am informd) that the security will be liable to be calld upon in case even after the arrival of their paltry little vessel in America any other Person should purchase it for a privateer. Strangers unknown, & as it seems in the Eyes of the inhabitants here, unprotected, can never hope to find security against such remote consequences. So that unless Administration grants these unfortunate sufferers the same privilege that is taken every day by our Enemies in this port, they must give up the property imbarkd in the adventure & return, each one execrating french timidity, partiality & politics, to his own Country, or seek happier fortune in the shore opposite to this. To sell their vessel will be impossible, as no one will venture to buy a vessel so circumstanc'd, & their goods that make up the Cargo will inevitably be disposd of to vast loss. I beg you to represent this in a proper place & manner. The Manifest, spoken of, would have been sent up in a few days, had not this unexpected order arrivd, & you would have heard no more on a subject that has given you, Gentlemen, so much uneasiness & has so much exposd us in the eyes of the world. Our Countrymen that escape from Captivity in England fly to this place

as an asylum. Could they be encouragd here we should soon have not only many of them, but many English sailors who fly from the Press or desert the service, & from hence we could send them to other ports less offensive to England. I shall do myself the honor to write you more fully next post. I am,

Gentlemen, Your most obed<sup>t</sup> humble Ser<sup>t</sup>.,

W<sup>m</sup>. CARMICHAEL.

Dunkerque, June 30<sup>th</sup>, 1777.

Direct for me as to M<sup>r</sup> H——, under the name of Campbell, & let D<sup>r</sup> B. direct the Letter.

*Thomas Mss.*

JOHN ROSS TO JONATHAN WILLIAMS.

July 1<sup>st</sup>, 1777.

DEAR SIR,—Had M<sup>r</sup> Morris been on the Spot it wou'd be his Duty as Commercial Agent to manage the public concerns. His absence, however, gives you, in my opinion, the best right to take charge of property of the States under present circumstances; nor can I allow myself to think M<sup>r</sup> Greul will interfere upon a proper representation of your powers. There is little can be done before the Commissioners are consulted on the Subject, besides M<sup>r</sup> Lee, the new agent, being now at Paris, leaves no room to doubt of his being here in a few days, to assume the Sole management. Consequently it is incumbent on you to take the property under your care untill further orders. Thus far have I offered you my opinion, and beg to have it Explain'd to M<sup>r</sup> Greul in a proper manner, which I doubt not will convince him there can be no intention to interfere with him or his Friends. Had M<sup>r</sup> Morris consulted his own Interest or that of his employers, every trifling occurrence shoud not divert his attention and attendance from the business committed to his management. I am Your Humble Serv<sup>t</sup>,

To

JNO. ROSS.

M<sup>r</sup> Jonathan Williams.

*Thomas Mss.*



FROM BENJAMIN FRANKLIN.

Passy, July 3, 1777.

DEAR SIR,—I have just receiv'd the inclos'd from St. Malo, which I send for your Consideration, & as Capt. Wickes will want Credit there, perhaps it may be well to accept the Offers of these Gentlemen. I shall be satisfy'd perfectly with what you may think proper to do on the Occasion.

I am, with great Esteem,  
Your most obedient,  
humble Serv<sup>t</sup>,

B. FRANKLIN.

Hon<sup>ble</sup> Silas Deane, Esq<sup>r</sup>*Deane Papers, Treasury Department.*

TO JONATHAN WILLIAMS.

Paris, July 4th, 1777.

DEAR SIR,—Yours of the 30th ulto. and 1st inst. are before us. Mr. Morris, were he present, has not the least right to any direction of Captain Wickes or his prizes, and less so to Johnson or Nicholson. They are Continental property, and are immediately under our direction, by the express orders of Congress, and under no other persons.

Inclosed you have a letter to Captain Wickes and to Captains Johnson and Nicholson on this subject. Mr. Lee's arrival would make no odds in this business, as it is distinct from anything contained in either of their appointments, and your appointment from us is the only one at present that can be of any force; we therefore direct you not to give way to any pretensions of any one, but, consulting with Mr. Ross and Captain Wickes, proceed to dispose of the prizes and to settle their affairs in the best and most expeditious manner possible. Mr. Deane has wrote to Captain Wickes to address to the house you mention.

I am, &amp;c.,

SILAS DEANE.

[Enclosure.]

Paris, July 4th, 1777.

SIR,—We have appointed Mr. Williams to take direction of such affairs at Nantes as are more particularly with our department, and accordingly advise you to address yourself to him for any assistance you stand in want of in the disposition of your prizes or your other concerns. You will give directions to Captains Johnson and Nicholson, which renders it unnecessary for us to write to each one separately. We are yours, &c.

B. FRANKLIN,  
SILAS DEANE.

To Lambert Wickes, Esq.

*Case of Silas Deane, Seventy-Six Society, p. 200.*

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FROM WILLIAM CARMICHAEL.

Dunkerque, July 8<sup>th</sup>, 1777.

DEAR SIR,—I wrote to you & D<sup>r</sup> Franklin repeatedly. I have received two Letters from you & you mention three. I have endeavored as much in my power to comply with y<sup>r</sup> orders to get out, with as little noise as possible, Hodge's vessel here, & at the same time to bring the French Ministry into no alterations on our acct. This I have endeavored to do, but their order requiring security has rendered this ineffectual. I beg you to get a favorable explanation of this order at the same time. Altho the expence is heavy to the owner, I think it the best step imaginable to make a noise in England. No less than five vessels are now imployed to block this harbor, & at least ½ dozen Expresses have been imployed for two days past. I have ordered the little vessel to have her sails unbent untill orders from Court are received. This will get the English cruisers out of the road, & will call them in again on the first preparations they make to get out. Your attention to my former Letter is desired particularly,



as I have a strong intermittent fever at this moment, & I have had for these 2 days past, which will plead my excuse for this letter. I have much to do to manage Hodge.

I am D<sup>r</sup> Sir, yours, &c.,  
W<sup>m</sup> CARMICHAEL.

If nothing explicit can be obtained to inable the owner to get out his vessel, the expence is too heavy, in my opinion, to continue the operations any longer.

To Mons<sup>r</sup> Deane, a Paris.

*Thomas Mss.*

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FROM WILLIAM CARMICHAEL.

Dunkerque, July 10<sup>th</sup>, 1777.

GENTLEMEN,—I have had the honor of receiving your Letter of the 7<sup>th</sup> of July, and am sorry that you have not had an opportunity of yet applying to the Minister on the subject of M<sup>r</sup> Hodge's vessel. The bond required was to give security here that the vessel should not cruise against the English. The expressions of the Minister's letters were so vague and general, that the officers here were obligd to write up to court for an explanation of the Minister's intentions; so that untill answers to those letters arrive, things must remain in *Statu quo*, to the great cost & risque of the owner. I wrote you that five English cruisers are now employd to watch her motions, three of which are in this road. Were it not that it will be disagreeable, probably, to the Court of France to have its Ports thus blockd up, I would advise you to buy this vessel from the owner, & apply it merely to the purpose of giving business to the English Commissary here & of detaining so many English vessels in the neighbourhood of this Port, instead of cruizing against our trade. At all events, an Individual cannot afford to be at the expence, so that if orders should not be expedited before this reaches you, I

must again repeat our request that you would pray the Ministry to be so explicit in their orders that nothing may create longer delay. Mr Hodge will be obligd again to take back his property, as he sold her without informing the owner of the peculiarity of her situation. As you expressd a desire to have a copy of the Letter wrote by the Compté De Maurepas to Parker Forth,\* I have been at some pains to obtain the general purport of it, which translated is as follows:

“SIR,—I am not surprizd that the effect of his Lordship’s illness and the variety of business in which he is involved should plead as his excuse for not writing. The capture of the Packett boat† must, I dare say, have made a great noise with you. The affair is very simple; the vessel which took her was cleard out as a smuggler. Not one of the crew were French. The manner of clearance & the precautions taken with respect to the crew will acct for the secrecy with which the plan was carried on. Every method hath been taken to come at the bottom of the affair and to procure the necessary reparation. The Paquet shall be restord; the desire of continuing the peace cannot be expressd by his Lordship with more fervor than it is wishd by me. I shall always think myself happy to display these sentiments as well as the regard with which I am, &c., &c.

M—— [MAUREPAS.]

As you know the manner in which I obtaind this, & that it is often impossible to have opportunity to copy, altho’ one may have time to read such things, the not being able to produce the original or literal copy is a circumstance of no great moment. If you think it of any consequence, I can obtain you the history of this man’s intrigues, by which, at least, the French Minister

\* Secretary of the English Embassy at Paris.

† The Harwich packet, *Prince of Orange*, was taken by Conyngham when he first sailed from Dunkirk in the *Surprise*. The lugger here mentioned, called the *Revenge*, sailed on the 18th of July, under his command.



may see what a low life criminal they honor with their notice. I have been very unwell ever since my arrival, but hope a change of weather will recruit me. The Merchants here are alarmed at the Captures made by the English. If the Ministry would communicate to the Chamber of Commerce their intentions of reclaiming their vessels and of protecting their trade, it would remove their apprehensions and increase the number of adventurers to our part of the world. Mr Hodge is obliged to apply to you for a credit, as his expedition has been attended with such additional expence, occasioned by the delay, that he tells me his funds are quite exhausted. I beg my Compliments to Dr Bancroft & Mr Franklin, & am, Gentlemen, your most obed<sup>t</sup> humble Ser<sup>t</sup>,

W<sup>m</sup> CARMICHAEL.

The Lugger is made French property, & is ready to be sent round to Nantes whenever Mr Hodge shall receive your orders.

Since writing the preceeding I find that we shall have no farther delay in getting out this vessel, which we shall set out with as much expedition as possible.

Addressed, To the honorable Benjamin Franklin & Silas Deane, Esq<sup>rs</sup>, at Paris.

*Thomas Mss.*

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FROM WILLIAM CARMICHAEL.

Dunkerque, July 12<sup>th</sup>, 1777.

GENTLEMEN,—In my last I transmitted you an account of the extraordinary conduct of the Captain of one of the British ships-of-war lying in this road. That ship joined by two others block up the road so as to make it impossible for any vessel to quit this port without being detected by one or other of them. The detention of the vessel formerly belonging to Mr Hodge occasions an enormous expence, for his good nature having prompted him to give a passage & to advance

money for the support of every American who wished to get to his own country, the vessel now lays at the expence of more than 300 livres p<sup>r</sup> day. Nothing new has happend since my last. Accident having brought to my knowledge a transaction of the English Commissary here, I thought the interest of France & America so much the same, that I trouble you with a deposition of the Fact, at the same time that I have prompted the poor sufferer to make an application from whence alone she can hope redress. You will make the subject of the inclosd deposition known to the Ministry of France to show them that other people debauch without notice their best Pilots, whilst if our Captains only ingage a single sailor in our service, complaints are usherd with great noise to them, on the improper steps the Americans take.

The merchants here have stoppd all thoughts of adventuring in the American commerce untill they know whether the Court will reclaim their property, both ship & cargo, if not taken within the Limit Prescribd by treaty. I have seen letters from various parts of France on the same subject & with the same determination. It is, in my humble opinion, a matter of great importance that the court should explain themselves explicitly on this subject. If they will sacrifice thus the Commerce of France to please the English, what are we to expect in our favor? It would be injustice to M<sup>r</sup> Hodge to say that my presence is longer necessary here, unless you have other objects. I wish to have an opportunity of rendering service, & I must confess I can see nothing here that merits a double expence. M<sup>r</sup> D——[eane] often mentiond, as a circumstance that might give a diversion to our enemies, an attempt to excite the White Boys in Ireland. I think there are one or two Irish Priests here who could be made use of to that purpose, provided they could be promised some arms & ammunition; at least, it would not cost a great deal to sound the disposition of these desperate people. I shall wait untill I have your answer to this Letter, when I



hope you will either persuade the Court to send vessels to protect the Trade of their port, or to say at once that we must not do the least thing there which may offend the English. In that case, if their present requisitions are complyd with, their next will be to forbid the exportation of a bale of French goods to America, & to make your persons Contraband in France. I wait impatiently for your news & instructions, & am with much respect, Gentlemen,

Your most humble Ser<sup>t</sup>,

W<sup>m</sup> CARMICHAEL.

Make my Compliments to Doctor B——[ancroft]. He will always explain what I write to him.

The inclosed deposition being wrote in a hand well known [in] Public burreauxs, it will be necessary to have it copied.

The Honorable Silas Deane, Esq<sup>r</sup>, at Paris.

*Thomas Mss.*

FROM THOMAS MORRIS.

SILAS DEANE, ESQ<sup>r</sup>,

SIR,—I had the honour to address you last on the 12<sup>th</sup> Instant, the Contents of which are hereby confirmed. The present is solely to hand you an Extract from a letter I received by Doctor Franklin from the Secret Committee of Congress, dated at Philad<sup>a</sup>, Oct. 25<sup>th</sup>, 1776, as follows :

“ This goes by the Continental Ship of War the Reprisal, Lam<sup>t</sup> Wickes, Esq<sup>r</sup>, Comm<sup>r</sup>, who will make but a short stay at Nantes, and proceed on a Cruize immediately, and if fortunate some of the Prizes may probably be sent into the Ports of France. The Comm<sup>rs</sup> will apply at Court for the Liberty & protection of their Ports. If this should be granted, its probable they may also permit the sale of Prizes there, and in such Case the Prizes, or such parts of their Cargoes as are to be sold in France, will be put under your direc-

tion. You must take Care that every thing is disposed of to the best advantage, apply the n. proceeds to the payments we have ordered you to make on acco<sup>t</sup> (of) the Publick, and render us exact Acc<sup>ts</sup> of what you Credit us in this way under a particular account sale for each Prize."

Signed, R. Morris, Rich<sup>d</sup> H. Lee, Jos<sup>h</sup> Bartlett,  
Francis Lewis & Phil. Livingston.

I have taken the Liberty of sending you the above Extract to shew by what authority I act in the sale of Prizes, and remain w<sup>h</sup> much respect, Sir, your most obed<sup>t</sup> Serv<sup>t</sup>,

THO<sup>s</sup> MORRIS.

*Thomas Mss.*

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FROM JOHN ROSS.

Nantes, 19<sup>th</sup> July, 1777.

DEAR SIR,—By last post I acknowledged receipt of yours, and then flattered myself I should to-day be able to communicate M<sup>r</sup> Morris's Sentiments to you regarding what you have recommended. However, for some days could not get a sight of him. How he has been employed is best known to himself. Before your letter came to my hand, I proposed to him to resign the sole management of public & private business, from a conviction of his inattention and neglect, in superintending matters of less importance to his own reputation and to those of his distant connection's.

To this he replied he had determined in his own mind not to relinquish the management of either untill he heard further from his Brother, whose apprehension had been ill-grounded, as he could convince him and all his Friends the business had hitherto been conducted with regularity, and that nothing had suffered in what was committed to his care. I took the liberty to contradict his assertions from my own particular knowledge of the contrary, and informed him what such resolution



might hazard if he persisted when possessed of his Brother's Letter, and particularly acquainted with the instructions I had received therewith. At the same time, I insisted, if determined to abide by so absurd a contempt of his Brother's orders, on his writeing me a letter, stateing his reasons for refuseing a surrender of what I knew him incapable of conducting without Risqueing a further Sacrifyce of the Interest of his employer's, & an additional loss of reputation to himself & to those of his connections thereby.

This letter he promised to furnish me, and might serve to justifie my attention to the trust reposed by our friend in me, but have not obtained it as yet. I have, therefore, reason to conclude it will not be possible for me without positive new powers to command a surrender of the private concerns of his house, and that I shall have the disagreeable task of corresponding with the friends of W. M. & C<sup>o</sup>, forbiding their future attention to his orders or correspondence. It is impossible for me, or any other person, to find out what abuse the house have sustained in point of Interest, nothing being entered to afford me the least insight thereto, but I know them to suffer thro his folly and extravagance more than he ever can retrieve respecting their Credit & Character. Permit me now to give it as my Opinion to you and *advice* that the Commissioners interpose immediately, Exercise their power, and place the Execution & management of all future concerns of the public in some secure hand. Our friend, M<sup>r</sup> Robert Morris, has placed the utmost confidence in both you and me. We should be wanting, and indeed to blame, did anything escape us under present circumstances in any degree prejudicial to his Interest and Reputation. It happens extreamily unfortunate at present, that M<sup>r</sup> Lee should be deprived from acting for want of proper instructions respecting his appointment as Joint Agent. Your Powers, I trust, may nevertheless prove sufficient to supply the want of a formal Commission untill it reach him. Accordingly, if so, and that he does act,

it is incumbent on you & me in particular to consult the Interest of M<sup>r</sup> Robert Morris in his absence untill we hear further from him, and have his own Opinion on the subject. I woud beg leave, therefore, to propose a continuation of his *Name* in the Managem<sup>t</sup> of the public business joined with M<sup>r</sup> Lee, or with such others as the Commissioners may see fit to appoint on the present occasion, and that every thing incumbent on our friend M<sup>r</sup> Morris may be complied with on his part as Joint Agents. I approve that you and I shoud look out and engage a carefull, capable man, in Character of Clark, to attend the business and be paid at his expence, untill matters can be better arranged, more suitable and satisfactory to the parties concerned. Youl believe, am *persuaded*, the opinion urged by me on this subject cannot proceed from any view of Interest to myself. I have in truth no such motives, on the Contrary, & I may venture to assure such agent as may be appointed here, if M<sup>r</sup> Morris' name shoud be discontinued, the business must be greatly lessened by the loss of such a connection. By a letter received from *you last* evening by M<sup>r</sup> Williams, I perceive you press him to a pursuit of geting possession of the prizes lately arrived. Some are sold, and I fear they may turn out so trifling on the settlement of the whole. I woud take the liberty to advise your permitting M<sup>r</sup> Morris to close the Sales, and the n<sup>t</sup> proceeds to be carried to the Credit of the United States, he being more in advance than will ballance such part as can come to their share. Your Letter to Captain Wickes (which he received from M<sup>r</sup> Williams) Sufficiently guards against any more coming to our friends hands in the same line, Captain Wickes having already directed the Commanders of the other Continental Ships of Force to conform to your instructions in the consignment of all future prizes. This, I forsee, may prevent noise, such as ought in our Situation to be avoided. Shall be glad to know your determination in Course, assuring you of every possible endeavour on my part to facilitate your resolutions,



if my services can be rendered usefull on the present or on any future occasion, that matters may be conducted in *future* with more regularity & prudence, and, I trust, more to the Satisfaction of all parties. My Respects to M<sup>r</sup>. Franklin. I sincerely remain,

D<sup>r</sup>. Sir,

Your very obed<sup>t</sup>. Servant,

J<sup>N</sup><sup>o</sup>. ROSS.

Silas Deane, Esq<sup>r</sup>.

*Thomas Mss.*

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FROM JOHN ROSS.

DEAR SIR,—I confirm and refer you to my last by the Saturdays post. Permit me now to inform you, M<sup>r</sup>. Morris is possessed of the Instructions to M<sup>r</sup>. Lee, from Committee of Congress, on his being appointed Commercial Agent here. Since your letter came to my hand, I suspected *this* to be the case from some circumstances, and by accident last evening learn it to be so.

These instructions are contained in a letter addressed to M<sup>r</sup>. Lee and M<sup>r</sup>. Morris as Joint Agents, which is similar and of equal force with the separate powers on which M<sup>r</sup>. Morris acted hitherto. I therefore take the liberty to recommend M<sup>r</sup>. Lee's repairing hither immediately, to assume the Management, being certain M<sup>r</sup>. Morris will possess him of this letter, so soon as they meet, tho' kept so long back, probably from inattention. Am pleased M<sup>r</sup>. Lee's objections to coming here is so far removed by this intimation, and flatter myself to have the pleasure of seeing him in Nantes previous to my departure, which I hope may be next week. I am with particular respect,

Dear Sir, Your most obed<sup>t</sup>. Servant,

J<sup>N</sup><sup>o</sup>. ROSS.

Nantes, 22d July, 1777.

N.B. Our Friend, I understand, has come to the pious Resolution not to permit my having any further access

to his papers or books, alledging I have been employed since my arrival to injure him all in my power; am therefore of opinion, nothing more can be done to Effect *any order in his affairs before* M<sup>r</sup> Lee join him.

To Silas Deane, Esq<sup>r</sup>

*Thomas Mss.*

FROM THOMAS MORRIS.

Nantes, July 24<sup>th</sup>, 1777.

GENTLEMEN,—I wrote M<sup>r</sup> Deane a short letter the 15<sup>th</sup> Instant, and have since received yours of the 19<sup>th</sup>. If you desire an entire copy of the letter I have had the honour to receive from the Secret Committee of Congress, dated at Philadelphia the 25<sup>th</sup> of October, you shall have it; but as I have already communicated that part of it to M<sup>r</sup> Deane, by which I am authorized to make Sale of all prizes taken by armed Vessells in the Continental service, I flatter myself its not necessary to send a Copy of the whole letter, as there are some matters that regard my own private affairs. However, your desires on this head shall be attended to by,

Gentlemen,

Your most obed<sup>t</sup> Servant,

THO<sup>s</sup> MORRIS.

The Hon<sup>ble</sup> Benj<sup>a</sup> Franklin & S. Deane, Esq<sup>rs</sup> at Paris.

*Thomas Mss.*

WILLIAM LEE TO FRANCIS LIGHTFOOT LEE.

Nantes in France,

9 Aug<sup>t</sup>, 1777.

MY DEAR SIR,—Among all the subjects of uneasiness which surround me, it is no inconsiderable consolation that I am likely to have from henceforth frequent opportunities of converseing with you by letter, which pleasure we have been deprived of for some time past. I have written very often, all of which I apprehend have fallen into the Enemie's hands, & your letters have not



met with a better fate, since every one for me that have reached this place, I have too much reason to believe have been open'd & secreted; therefore pray advise all that you know of, who intend writing to me, to give particular charge to the Bearer of their letters to deliver them into my own hands. This caution is absolutely requisite, for a certain set who unhappily have been too much trusted by your public, are by almost every person accused of opening & detaining letters, which by a number of artifices they contrive to get into their hands. By this means they have hitherto become acquainted with all private & public correspondences or wormed themselves into the favour of the Public bodys with you, to the infinite detriment of the Community. I shall do my part here to put a stop to these wicked practices, & you must aid on your part, particularly R. H. L., who seems to be an active person in the secret committee, from which body I have never yet received one Line, tho' I have been in this Country above two months for the express purpose of doing their business, to which I was summon'd in so urgent a manner by *one* of the Commissioners in Paris that I came away leaving behind my dearest connections, & all my property, for which I have been toiling these Twenty Years, to the mercy of the Enemy. No assiduity will be wanting on my part to do my duty & give content to my employers, but I am sure it will be attended with infinite difficulty unless the powers & department is kept totally distinct from the Commissioners at Paris. You can't at this time be unacquainted with the faithless principles, the low, dirty intrigue, the selfish views, & the wicked arts of a certain race of Men, &, believe me, a full crop of these qualities you sent in the first instance from Philadelphia to Paris. Such qualifications in a debauched Country might have been exerted for Public benefit, but where the most insufferable vanity & invincible regard for self-interest are the prevailing passions, public Good is only used as a stalking horse to promote private

emolument. I am in a Labyrinth of perplexities relative to my private concerns & tenderest connections. A loss of many thousand pounds will follow, but I think it my duty to submit to at present without repining, because it was not possible to be prevented, & I am sure everything was intended for the best, & I shall confidently rely that a strict attention to my duty will entitle me to compensation provided success attends our endeavours, & if it does not individuals must not complain at suffering with the Public. I find our particular Country is getting, indeed has already got, into a very bad connection. The sooner it is ended the better. You know that the Community or Individuals may at all times command my services, but if they are not approved of I wou'd certainly recommend them to much better hands than they are in at present. This place is situated in the center & not far distant from Bourdeaux, Rochelle, Rochfort, Brest, Port L'Orient & S<sup>t</sup> Malo's, so that with very little trouble I cou'd superintend business at either of those ports as well as this. I shall send duplicates of Acc<sup>ts</sup> Sale & Acc<sup>ts</sup> Cur<sup>t</sup> to all my correspondents very soon by a safe opportunity, which please to inform them of when you can, but from what preceeds you will readily see it is not in my power to pay here the ballances I may owe. My plan, therefore, must be to draw on substantial debtors in the Country to pay the Creditors on the spot.

As to public affairs, I have been some time removed from the great scene of Politics, yet I am well satisfied the British Ministry are every day growing more & more tired of the American War, & if the Gen<sup>ls</sup> Howe & Burgoyne do not make some considerable progress this campaign, it may be fully expected that G. B. will next winter acknowledge the Independance of America; which being done a peace may be made in two hours. However, with this pleasing prospect before her, common prudence directs that America shou'd at all events be fully provided for another Campaign, for there is no trusting Men that have so often deceived, &, indeed,



who must obey their master, whose obstinacy, folly & revenge knows no bounds. Nothing can hurt America but *disunion*, & if the wise measures pursuing in South Carolina are carried into execution in all the States, the seeds of that must be soon rooted out. You will no doubt receive full & ample information from the quarter that you have a right to expect it from, therefore, have only to assure you & all connections of my best Love, & that I am most Sincerely and affect<sup>ly</sup> Y<sup>rs</sup>,

WM. LEE.

*Lee Papers, Harvard University.*

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TO CARON DE BEAUMARCHAIS.

M<sup>r</sup> BEAUMARCHAIS:

SIR,—You are well acquainted with my having paid M<sup>r</sup> Eyries a Sum of Money on acc<sup>t</sup> of Mess<sup>rs</sup> Morris and others in Philadelphia, to be employed in the purchase of a Vessel, as well as with the whole of the proceedings in that affair, which I need not repeat here. You are also sensible of the Necessity of a speedy settlement with M<sup>r</sup> Eyries. I must, therefore, pray your kind assistance in bringing this transaction to a final Settlement as soon as possible, & that you will conduct the affair in the manner most conducive to that end. The necessary Papers relative thereto I send you herewith, by which you will see what Monies I have advanced to M<sup>r</sup> Eyries, & also M<sup>r</sup> Eyries' promise to be accountable to me therefor. I must rely on your Friendship & that you will act for me in this affair. As for yourself, I have wrote to M<sup>r</sup> Eyries, acquainting him with my proceedings.

I am, &c.,

S<sup>t</sup> DEANE.

Paris 9<sup>th</sup> August, 1777.

*Thomas Mss.*

## WILLIAM LEE TO RICHARD HENRY LEE.

Nantes, 12 Aug<sup>t</sup>, 1777.

MY DEAR SIR,—I wrote you twice since my being in this Country, but as they may miscarry, I must again mention that it is now above two months since I came to this Continent, in consequence of information I Rec<sup>d</sup> late in April, that I was honoured with the appointment of superintending the public commercial concerns in Europe, & being urged to come without delay, as things were going wrong & every day proving worse & worse. I hurried over, leaving my Dear and tender connections behind, with my whole property almost. The mortifications I have met with are not easily to be described, & they are not lessened by receiving advice this day from L[ondo]n that the utmost vengeance of the Enemy will be speedily exercised ag<sup>t</sup> me & mine. The sacrifice I have made of Honour, property, &c., wou<sup>d</sup> very little affect me if I found myself armed with sufficient powers to do any effectual public service & met with people more disposed to forward the general utility than to gratify their own pride & to promote their individual Interest. I shall be more explicit when I think the conveyance somewhat more certain than the present, therefore shall only say now that I cannot find any commission authorising me to act in a proper manner, & having too much reason to apprehend that all letters and dispatches for me have been opened & detained after they had reach<sup>d</sup> this Continent, even by those whom you had a right to expect sh<sup>d</sup> take care of & forward them safely. Since I have never rec<sup>d</sup> a line from the Committee or any of my particular friends for near 18 months past, I must request that you will take care to have duplicates of my appointment & instructions made out immediately, & transmitted by different & safe opportunities. I forbear to say anything about the Coadjutor you have appointed with me; you will probably hear enough about his strange & unhappy conduct from others,



who will probably be more attended to than I sh<sup>d</sup> be ; but if he is displaced, I hope there will be no hurry in appointing a successor until I am found insufficient for the business ; &, further, I must beg not to be in any manner what ever connected with a M<sup>r</sup> Carmichael, whom possibly you may have heard of. I know him most perfectly well, therefore you may be assured I speak on good grounds. In my judgment, y<sup>r</sup> Commercial Agents shou<sup>d</sup> be totally unconnected with y<sup>r</sup> Political Commissioners, unless the former shou<sup>d</sup> at any time find it proper to apply to them where the interference of Governmental powers shou<sup>d</sup> be wanted to compel justice, which may sometimes be the case in these Countries. The Commercial director's duty sh<sup>d</sup> be frequently to visit the different Countries and sea-ports, to superintend all Commercial business, maintain correspondence, see that all goods are properly ship<sup>d</sup> which may be ordered, & that all returns are disposed of properly, to settle accounts and fix connections every where that may be both beneficial & creditable, for which a proper genteel salary sh<sup>d</sup> be allow<sup>d</sup> & the travelling expences. Living in this Country as a gentleman is equally expensive as in England, & travelling more so. You know that in such a character the honour of the employment must be considered ; besides the person employed will always expect to make something more by his labour than a meer genteel living during the moment he is employed. I speak this openly and freely to you because I know your good sense & experience tells you they are the sentiments of all mankind, tho' few have honest boldness enough candidly to acknowledge them. This moment, while writing, Mr. Morris has sent me some letters from the Committee, directed to us jointly, and mentioning our appointment. *I shall now proceed with confidence.* and my first object will be to get a settlement made of what has passed thro the hands of Mess<sup>rs</sup> Pliarne, Penet and C<sup>o</sup>, Tho<sup>s</sup> Morris, Pliarne, Penet & C<sup>o</sup> and J. Gruel & C<sup>o</sup>, who are all the same people, tho' acting

under these different titles. As soon as I can see properly into former transactions, you shall hear fully from me. I know political dispatches are just now sent off to you, therefore have no occasion to say much on that head. But I must observe that tho there is very great reason to think that G. B. will acknowledge the Independance of America next Winter if Gen<sup>s</sup> Howe & Burgoyne do not gain some considerable advantages this Campaign, yet in Common prudence every measure sh<sup>d</sup> be taken to be well prepared for another Campaign; and if proper steps are followed to preserve Unanimity, it will be utterly impossible to hurt America.

I am, &c.,

W<sup>m</sup> LEE.

To R. H. Lee.

*Lee Papers, Harvard University.*

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FROM WILLIAM LEE.

Nantes, 12 August, 1777.

SILAS DEANE, ESQ.

DEAR SIR,—I am sorry that I did not have the honor of seeing you before I left Paris, tho' I wrote to you the day before I set out, and sent the letter to your house, desiring your dispatches might be with me that evening, as I should leave Paris the next morning, from whence we did not depart 'till eleven o'clock. It would give me a great deal of pain if I thought that any part of my conduct could give room for supposing that I could ever make an unwarrantable use of private confidential letters put into my hands. I have no reason in the world to believe that M<sup>r</sup> Ross would not at any time justify what he had written, but as far as I can recollect the contents of his letters, there is nothing in them that will ever stand in need of justification. However, I am not the less chagrined that I have not yet been able to find them among my books or papers, nor indeed the copys



that I know were taken by your consent. I well remember to have put into my brother's hands some papers which were intended to be the original letters for you, and it is very possible that in my hurry I gave him both originals and copies. Be pleased, therefore, to ask him for the papers I left with him for you, and if he has not the originals I will again and again search over all the books and papers I have here to find them for you, when they shall be immediately transmitted.

I will write you on business as soon as those that have hitherto been concerned here will permit me to enter on any, which has not been the case as yet, nor indeed have I been able to procure a sight of any letters, instructions, or papers whatsoever relative to the business. On Sunday the Hancock and Adams, Capt. Smith, arrived here from Charles Town, with 750 barrels of rice on the public account. I shall probably have something farther to say about this cargoe per next post.

I am &c.,

WILLIAM LEE.

P.S. I have never mentioned to M<sup>r</sup> Ross, or any one else here, that I ever saw any of his letters, nor shall I *do it*.

*Ford's Letters of William Lee, p. 215.*

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FROM JONATHAN WILLIAMS.

Extract of a letter dated Nantes, 21st August, 1777.

"I have received your favor of the 18th inst., and observe that matters relative to the ships of war and prizes are to remain as they were. The Lion goes on as fast as possible. I have been on board the prize brig, and do not think she is so very fine as was at first supposed. She is a very good merchant vessel, but is not well fitted for a fighting one, though capable of carrying about twelve guns, for a small defence, but they must

all fight exposed. Mr. Ross tells me he has written to you on the subject, and the matter rests whether according to his letter you will undertake or not. If we take her on private account she must be passed at 13,000 livres, because that has been offered for her, and I believe that is the extent she would sell for without guarantee."

J. WILLIAMS.

To the Hon. Silas Deane, Esq.

*Case of Silas Deane, Seventy-Six Society, p. 172.*

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TO ROBERT MORRIS.

Paris, 23rd August, 1777.

DEAR SIR,—My letter, No. 1. of this date, gives you the state of Captain Bell's proceedings and the circumstances attending it. In this I mean to give you a short view of the conduct of this Court, with respect to American ships of war, private as well as public, which I cannot well do without giving you a history of facts.

You know that when I left America the naval armaments were but beginning by the Congress, and the inquiry was hardly made, even by individuals, whether foreign powers would admit our cruisers and their prizes. After my arrival the question was first started by Captain Lee of Marblehead, at Bilboa, of which I gave you an account in my letters of October and November last. Captain Lee carried no prize into Bilboa with him, and the question turned simply on the complaint of the English Consul, charging him with having committed acts of piracy on the high seas in making prizes of English vessels. The commissary or governor of the port detained his vessel and sent to Court for directions, and received orders to set the vessel at liberty, which orders were accompanied with a general declaration that his Catholic Majesty was neuter in the dispute between England and America. Though the issue of this business was favorable, it was not direct to the point ;



we wished to establish the declaration of neutrality to be general.

In my letter of October and November last, some of which must have been received, I repeatedly gave my sentiments in favor of sending cruisers into these seas.

The first that arrived was the *Reprisal* with two prizes ; this caused much speculation, and at our first audience after, we were told that by the treaties subsisting between France and England, ships of war belonging to any foreign power at war with either could not be admitted into their ports, unless driven by stress of weather, or want of provisions, &c., and that in such case they could not be permitted to stay longer than twenty-four hours, or until they had taken on board the provisions necessary to carry them to the nearest port of their respective states, &c., as you will see in the treaty of commerce of 1713, confirmed by all the subsequent treaties. At the same time we were given to understand that every favor and indulgence compatible with the treaties would be shewn us, and that ways might be found out to dispose of those prizes without giving public offence to England. The hint was taken, the prizes disposed of, and the *Reprisal* repaired and fitted for another cruise, which she made on the coast of Spain, taking, among other English prizes, the packet boat from Lisbon, with which Captain Wickes returned to port L'Orient. On this the English Ambassador complained loudly, and the English merchants were alarmed. Insurance rose in London, and it was generally supposed that there would be a restitution of the prizes and detention of Captain Wickes, or a declaration of war. This Court then ordered the prizes as well as Capt. Wickes to leave the port in twenty-four hours. The former were sent out, but sold to French merchants, and Captain Wickes, his ship being leaky, was permitted to stay. Soon after this, Captain Johnson arrived in the *Lexington*, and we, having bought a cutter with a view of sending her out as a packet, altered our resolution, and equipped her as a cruiser, and sent her and the *Lexington* out under the

command of Captain Wickes as commodore, with the design of intercepting the Irish linen ships. But by contrary winds, and mistaking the time of the sailing of those ships, they were unsuccessful as to the main object ; but as they sailed quite round Ireland, and took or destroyed seventeen or eighteen sail of vessels, they most effectually alarmed England, prevented the great fair at Chester, occasioned insurance to rise, and even deterred the English merchants from shipping goods in English bottoms at any rate, so that in a few weeks forty sail of French ships were loading in the Thames on freight, an instance never before known.

But upon this, the English Ambassador complained in a higher tone, and gave us much difficulty ; the prizes, however, were disposed of, though at a prodigious loss, and Captain Wickes set about repairing and refitting the Reprisal, which had been obliged to throw over her guns and saw some of her beams, to escape a seventy-four gun ship which chased her and the Lexington on their return from their cruise. But before he was refitted, orders were sent from Court to detain his vessel and the Lexington until further orders. This was owing partly to Captain Wickes having repeatedly come into the ports of France with prizes, and refitted his ship for fresh cruises, it being directly contrary to the treaty, which they pretend to hold sacred, and partly to the transaction at Dunkirk and the consequent threatenings of the British Ministry. In this situation Captain Wickes and Captain Johnson remain at present. Soon after Mr. Hodge's arrival, we bought a lugger at Dover, and sent her to Dunkirk. Mr. Hodge went after her and equipped her with great secrecy, designing a blow in the North Sea. He sent Captain Cunningham in her, and ordered him to intercept the packet between England and Holland, and then to cruise northward towards the Baltic. Cunningham fell in with the packet in a day or two after leaving Dunkirk, and took her. As she had a prodigious number of letters on board, he imagined it was proper he should return to Dunkirk



instead of continuing his course ; in his return he also took a brig of some value, and brought both prizes into port. This spread the alarm far and wide, and gave much real ground of complaint, as he had been entirely armed and equipped in Dunkirk, and had returned thither with his prizes. The Ministry, therefore, to appease England ordered the prizes to be returned, and Cunningham and his crew to be imprisoned, which gave the English a temporary triumph.

But not discouraged thereby, another cutter was bought and equipped completely in the port of Dunkirk. Cunningham and his crew were set at liberty, and with some address and intrigue he got again to sea from the same port, in a swift sailing cutter, mounting fourteen six pounders and twenty-two swivels, with one hundred and six men. His first adventure greatly raised insurance on the northern trade ; even the packet boats from Dover to Calais were for some time insured. On his leaving the port of Dunkirk the second time, he had orders to proceed directly for America, but he and his crew, full of resentment for the insults they had received from the enemy whilst in prison at Dunkirk and afterwards, attacked the first vessels they met with, and plundered and burnt as they went on. Our last accounts are, that they had taken or destroyed about twenty sail, and had appeared off the town of Lynn and threatened to burn it unless ransomed ; but the wind proving unfavorable, they could not put their threats into execution. In a word, Cunningham, by his first and second bold expeditions, is become the terror of all the eastern coast of England and Scotland, and is more dreaded than Thurot was in the late war. But though this distresses our enemies, it embarrasses us. We solicited his enlargement, and Mr. Hodge engaged for his going directly for America. I know not how his engagement was expressed, but to appease the British Ministry and drive off an instant war, Mr. Hodge has been arrested and confined. His friends need not be in distress for him ; he will soon be at liberty. He merits much from

- his country, having been ready at all times to promote and serve its interests.

Just before the sailing of Cunningham, Captain Burrall arrived in a Maryland pilot boat. He made several prizes in his passage, and brought one into Cherbourg with him. He came to Paris for our advice, but on his return suffered himself to be enticed on board an English cutter in the port, where he was instantly seized, and the cutter came to sail and carried him off prisoner. We complained, and were promised that he should be reclaimed by this Court ; it has probably been done, but we have received no answer. The ship General Mifflin, after cruising some time on the coasts of England and Ireland, put into Brest, and there, under Continental colors, saluted the admiral, who, after consulting his officers, returned the salute, which causes much speculation, and shows that the officers, as well as the other orders in this kingdom, are much in our interest. But the politics of this Court are intricate, and embarrassed with connexions and alliances on the continent of Europe, which, with the state of their fleet, and their sailors being abroad in the fishery, &c., puts off bold and decisive measures. Some other prizes have arrived in different ports, particularly two valuable Jamaicamen sent into Nantes a few days since by Captains Babson and Hendricks.

This is a brief account of the proceedings of our cruisers, who have put into the ports of this kingdom. The prizes are sold without condemnation, and consequently to a great loss, as the whole is conducted secretly, and put too much in the power of the agents. Though these cruisers have not been profitable to us, they have been of infinite prejudice to our enemies, both in their commerce and reputation. I will not add to this, as I shall write another letter by this conveyance.

I beg my best compliments to Mrs. Morris, and that you will believe me, ever, dear sir, yours, &c.,

SILAS DEANE.

P.S. Since writing the above the two Jamaica prizes



are, by order of Court, arrested, and it remains doubtful whether they will not be restored to the original proprietors. The captain of one of the privateers, on his passage, took on board a lady, who was prisoner on board an American privateer bound for Boston. This he did from motives of humanity. On his arrival at Painbeuf she wrote to her brother, a merchant at Nantes, who came down, and hoping to get the consignment of the prizes, officiously advised the captain to report them as ships laden at St. Eustatia, which they did, and on their arrival at Nantes consigned the prizes to Messrs. Lee & Williams who immediately made a private sale of them. Meantime the owners, being acquainted with the proceeding, and knowing that the ships and cargoes, by being regularly entered, were in the hands of the custom house, lodged claims, showing that they had been falsely entered, and were English property captured by American privateers, and consequently by treaty could not be sold in France. This obliged the Government to arrest the prizes or openly violate the treaty. Mr. Williams came up a few days since and presented a memorial on the subject, but I fear he will receive an unfavorable answer. Orders are received for Captains Wickes and Johnson to depart the ports of France. I purpose sending duplicates of this letter by each of them. I cannot omit any opportunity of doing justice to these gentlemen, their officers and seamen, whose conduct has been such as merits the approbation of their countrymen, and has given reputation to our navy in France. They will not be able to carry out any goods, though we had purchased some with a design of sending by them, particularly a quantity of saltpetre. This, with other articles to a considerable amount, will be sent in the course of this and the next month. I have received letters a few days since, advising that Captain Cunningham was at Ferrol. I know not where he designs next, having nothing directly from him.

S. D.

To ——— BAUDIN.

Paris, 26<sup>th</sup> August, 1777.

MONS<sup>R</sup> BAUDIN, ISLE DE RHE.

SIR,—In answer to yours of the 15<sup>th</sup>, I have to inform you that I had the pleasure of seeing your son, & gave him letters of introduction to America; at the same time I must say that I do not think there is at this time any great prospect of Promotion in the Army in America, as all Posts & Employments are filled, and I am well informed that though many foreigners have rec<sup>d</sup> Commissions, yet there are many gone and going there who cannot procure Commissions. You may, however, rely that the Gentleman to whom I have taken the Liberty of recommending your son is a person of as much influence as any in America, & will show your son every mark of Civility & assist him as far as is in his power. Inclosed you have the Certificate & Passport necessary for Capt. Ketchum, and I doubt not M<sup>r</sup> Williams will pay due attention to the goods you mention as being to be purchased with you, & you may depend on my mentioning the subject to such of my acquaintance as are speculating in America. I have the honor to be, &c.,

S. DEANE.

N. B. Mr. Delap duly wrote us on the subject, & the delay of the answer has been occasioned by accident.

*Thomas Mss.*

To ——— EYRIES.

Paris, 27<sup>th</sup> August, 1777.

MR. EYRIES,

SIR,—I understand that Cap<sup>t</sup> Hynson knows nothing of wh<sup>t</sup> is doing on board the Pacifique more than if he were now in Paris, & y<sup>t</sup> every Lett<sup>r</sup> I have wrote him has been intercepted. This is really alarming & gives me very great uneasiness. You remember



I complained of the Bills on the Cutter & of several other matters, & told you openly of my dissatisfaction. I am really sorry that after I had pointed you out a plain method for preventing future uneasiness, it should be entirely disregarded. You must remember that Cap<sup>t</sup> Hynson was to give the directions for every thing & to examine & sign the Bills, instead of which he is ignorant of wh<sup>t</sup> is doing, & has no Command and no pretence of serving. You never can suppose that I can be satisfied with such a Conduct, & I am surprized after what has already past that it should be continued. I once more send Cap<sup>t</sup> Hynson a Lett<sup>r</sup>, in which I have directed him to see to every thing himself, but if he is not permitted, in that case to quit the Concern immediately. I wrote you the 17<sup>th</sup> on the subject of y<sup>e</sup> affair at Marseilles, to which have rec<sup>d</sup> no answer. Every circumstance confirms me in my Opinion of Le Fevre [Viz.] that he has acted dishonestly from the first, & that the whole misfortunes have been occasioned by him. You cannot suppose me very easy in mind after paying out above Ninety thousand Liv<sup>s</sup> to be thus disappointed. Your Secretary is perhaps by this time returned from Marseilles; if so, I wish to hear if you can give me any satisfaction on the subject. I am, &c.,

S. DEANE.

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO CAPT. HYNSON.

Paris, 27<sup>th</sup> August, 1777.

CAPT. HYNSON,

SIR,—I wrote you the 4<sup>th</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup> & 21<sup>st</sup> inst<sup>t</sup>. In y<sup>e</sup> 17<sup>th</sup>, I sent a Copy of my Lett<sup>r</sup> of the 4<sup>th</sup>. I now have before me a Copy of yours of the 24<sup>th</sup>, by which it does not appear that you have rec<sup>d</sup> any of my Letters. This, & the pretended hurry with which every thing is conducted, convinces me of wh<sup>t</sup> I have long suspected; viz., that you are in the hands of a very dishonest man. I once more inclose a Copy of my Letter of the 4<sup>th</sup>, &

again insist that before you leave Havre you see that every Bill is just, & that every thing has been Conducted as it ought to be, for I freely own to you I have lost all Confidence in Eyries. You will than ask me why I have dealt with him at all for this vessel. I answer at once, to get my money out of his hands. But if he withholds anything from your knowledge, quit him immediately. I have wrote directly to Eyries by this Post, & am, with due respect, Sir, y<sup>rs</sup>, &c.,

S. DEANE.

P. S. I have repeatedly told you that you cannot be permitted to Cruise the Channel, & were I to give you a Commission for that purpose it would be fatal to me, therefore urge no more on the subject. I once more inclose the Orders I gave the 4<sup>th</sup>, & must insist that you see every thing done to your satisfaction, or that you instantly tell Eyries you will have nothing to do in the affair. I am, &c.,

S. DEANE.

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO JAMES MOYLAN.

Paris, August 27<sup>th</sup>, 1777.

SIR,—Yours of the 24<sup>th</sup> I rec<sup>d</sup>, & now send my Lett<sup>r</sup> to Hynson under Cover, as directed. I have no Correspondence with the house you mention; no knowledge of them more than the Lett<sup>r</sup> I sent by you, in ans<sup>r</sup> to one of theirs on the subject of American Commerce. We are still without News direct from America, but by way of England hear that Howe suffered greatly in his Retreat from the Jersies; that Gen<sup>l</sup> Prescott is made Prisoner, & that Gen<sup>l</sup> Howe was at New York on the 22<sup>d</sup> July with all his Forces embarked or embarking, but their destination was a profound secret.

I am, &c.,

S. DEANE.

Mr. Jas. Moylan at Havre,

*Thomas Mss.*



TO JONATHAN WILLIAMS.

Paris, 27<sup>th</sup> Augt., 1777.

MR. WILLIAMS,

SIR,—I am favoured with yours of the 21. & 23. as well to the Commissioners in general as to myself in Particular, to which shall reply by next post, Capt. Thompson waiting whilst I write. The Prize Brig spoke of, I am quite indifferent about, but I am willing, if on consulting with Mr. Ross you judge the Plan will do, to take one-third of her, load her with Salt, & send her to Virginia; I do this as the Congress have no freight for her, and as you think she will not answer as a ship of war, for would she answer their purpose I would prefer their taking of her to any other disposition. Consult M<sup>r</sup> Ross & let me know your Determination. As to the Duties, you shall hear from us as soon as application can be made. Y<sup>r</sup> Letters were rec<sup>d</sup> but last night. I wish some provision could be made for Capt. Thompson; he seems dissatisfied, & with me for preferring Capt. Nicholson to him, which is very unjust towards me, yet I have still the same desire to serve him if in my Power. I think him a man of merit, & such I wish to see in the service of their Country, whether they are or are not attached to me. I shall write to M<sup>r</sup> Ross tomorrow; meantime am expecting at every post the result of his Proceedings at L'Orient.

I am, &c.,

S. DEANE.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO JONATHAN WILLIAMS.

Paris, 27<sup>th</sup> Augt., 1777.

M<sup>r</sup> WILLIAMS,

SIR,—The Bearer, Capt. Williams, with Capt. Robinson, have had the misfortune to be made prisoners. They have lately escaped from England and are in want

of employ or a passage to America. I have recommended them, therefore, to your assistance in procuring one or the other or both as soon as may be. I can but hope that some of the vessels going out may want persons capable as they are of conducting a vessel to America & on that coast. I wish it were in my power to procure them immediate employ, but it is not, and by going to Nantes, they will be at less expence & more in the way of business.

I am, &c.,

S. DEANE.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO JONATHAN WILLIAMS.

Paris, Aug<sup>t</sup> 28<sup>th</sup>, 1777.

JONATHAN WILLIAMS, ESQ.,

SIR,—Having obtained permission for the Dolphin to sail for America on condition of her not cruising in these seas nor returning again to the Ports of France, you will equip her for sailing with all the Expedition Possible. We have agreed to appoint Capt. Brown to the command of her. If agreeable to him, let him take the charge of her and put her in a proper state to perform the voyage. We shall put as many heavy goods on board as she will carry without damage to her sailing. We say we have obtained permission, being assured orders to that effect are gone from the Minister, but should they not be arrived, inform us by the return of the Post, and at the same time say how early the Dolphin may be ready for sea.

We are, &c.,

B. FRANKLIN.

S. DEANE.

*Thomas Mss.*



TO LAMBERT WICKES.

Paris, 28<sup>th</sup> Aug<sup>t</sup>, 1777.LAMBERT WICKES,\* ESQ<sup>r</sup>.

SIR,—We conclude by this, orders are rec<sup>d</sup> for permitting you to depart for America on condition of not cruising in these Seas nor returning into the Ports of France with the Reprisal. We therefore desire you to put y<sup>r</sup> ship into the proper state for sailing, & to supply her with the Provisions necessary for the Voyage. We must wait to know from you what quantity of Heavy Articles the Reprisal will carry without prejudice to her sailing. The Goods we have in view are Salt Petre, Anchors, Large Cordage, &c. We have wrote to Capt. Johnson to the same purpose, & hope he will be ready by the time you are. Your letter of the inst. is before us, & y<sup>r</sup> sentiments correspond with ours on the Subject. We are fully convinced that the previous measures are merely temporary, and that affairs must soon take a very different turn; but at all Events, the Reprisal & Lexington may be of as much or more service to America by returning with some necessaries, as by continuing in Europe. We hope for y<sup>r</sup> answer by the return of this Post, after which we shall write you more particularly. In the mean time we are, &c.,

B. FRANKLIN.  
S. DEANE.

P. S. As we are in effect guaranties for y<sup>r</sup> complying with these conditions, we rely on y<sup>r</sup> honor not to break them.

*Thomas Mss.*

\* Eleventh in rank among the Continental captains. Commanding the *Reprisal* and with Franklin on board, he made the first voyage across the Atlantic in a United States war ship.

TO CAPT. HENRY JOHNSON.

Paris, 28<sup>th</sup> Aug<sup>t</sup> 1777.

CAPT. JOHNSON,

SIR,—We conclude that by this, orders are arrived permitting the Lexington to sail directly for America, if not they will be with you in a few days; we therefore advise you to settle the concerns of the Lexington at Morlaix, & engage a quantity of Provisions sufficient to carry her Crew to America. You will make out an estimate of every thing necessary & make the purchase to the best advantage. You are to pay particular attention to the fitting y<sup>r</sup> vessel in the best manner for sailing, as you may probably be charged with some dispatches of importance. The conditions of this permission are that you are not to cruise in these seas nor return into the Ports of France, but to proceed directly for America. You will inform us if the Lexington is capable of carrying, any quantity of Merchandise without prejudice to her sailing & how much, that we may give orders accordingly. You must have ballast at least. Let us know what Quantity, for as Salt Petre & other heavy articles are wanted in America, they may serve the purpose to advantage. We are fully sensible of y<sup>r</sup> abilities & zeal in the cause of America, & sorry that you are prevented from further exerting them in these seas at present. But we hope this Prohibition will be but temporary, & that you will be soon in a way to renew y<sup>r</sup> attacks on our Enemies with greater advantage. The expences of y<sup>r</sup> repairs and equipment will be duly paid to the order of the Gentlemen on whom you value yourself at Morlaix.

We are, &amp;c.,

B. FRANKLIN.  
S. DEANE.

P.S. Write us by the first Post. We are in effect Guaranties for y<sup>r</sup> complying with the conditions, & rely on y<sup>r</sup> Honor not to violate them.

*Thomas Mss.*



TO WILLIAM LEE.

Paris, 29<sup>th</sup> Aug<sup>t</sup>, 1777.

SIR,—Your Brother communicated to me this morning part of a Letter from you, to which I will write particularly next post; at present can only say that of 20,000 £ ordered me by Congress, I have not rec<sup>d</sup> one shilling, which M<sup>r</sup> Morris very well knows, & that I have repeatedly urged him on the subject, as a very important Commission remains unexecuted for want of it, & myself exposed to blame until it shall be known that I had not the means for executing the orders of Congress. As to the 10,000 £, we have I judge rec<sup>d</sup> about 70,000 Livres. Orders indeed were given for our receiving in the whole about 12,000 but these orders for reasons unknown to us have been countermanded, & we at this moment are not only without one shilling of that sum ordered us, but in advance for our expences. This is the general situation of this affair. I will give you the particulars & all the Lights in my Power, in this and other Transactions with which I am acquainted, so far as they respect & will tend to expedite the affairs with which you are intrusted. M<sup>r</sup> Penet you say will acc<sup>t</sup> with me for the 86 H<sup>ds</sup> of Tobacco. It is surely high time, for he rec<sup>d</sup> them in April last, & I wish he would without delay close the affair. I have wrote him three Letters on the subject without an answer.

I am, &amp;c.,

S. DEANE.

Alderman Lee.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO ROBERT MORRIS.

Paris, 1<sup>st</sup> Sep<sup>r</sup>, 1777.

SIR,—The Bearer, M<sup>r</sup> De Myer, is a Gentleman from Sweden, a L<sup>t</sup> in the Swedish service. His desire of distinguishing himself in the service of America has induced him to make this Voyage. I told his Friend who recommended him to me, that I would engage for

nothing, as I was certain the Employments in the American Army were taken up, but as he had given such proofs of his Zeal, in his undertaking such a voyage, at his Own Expence, I had no doubt of his proving himself to be a person of merit, & would therefore give him Letters of introduction to my Friends, who on his arrival would inform him what prospects there were of his being employed & in what manner. I therefore take the Liberty of recommending him to your good Offices. He is, I believe, the first of his Nation that has joined the American Standard, & I hope his Conduct & consequently his acception will be such as may render service to Our Country & honor to himself.

I have the honor to be, &c., &c.,

S. DEANE.

Hon. R. Morris, Esq<sup>r</sup>

*Thomas Mss.*

TO ROBERT MORRIS.

Paris, 3<sup>d</sup> Sept<sup>r</sup>, 1777.

DEAR SIR,—The Bearer, Mons<sup>r</sup> Le Baron de Steuben, has seen more than 20 years service under the King of Prussia, part of which he served as quarter master general and aid de Camp to the King. The General Peace in Europe, and a desire of distinguishing himself in the American Contest, induce him to make the Tenders of his service to the Congress. He has Letters of Recommendation from Prince Henry of Prussia and other great Personages, and is warmly recommended by the ministry here, who are acquainted with his person & character. He came to Paris about two months since, with the design of Embarking immediately; but no opportunity offering, and being advised to suspend his resolution for a short time, he returned to Germany, and being applied to by some of our friends here, who have generously defrayed the expences of his voyage, he made a second Journey to Paris. But not certain of pursuing his voyage, he left behind him the Certificates



of his service, which he had with him on his first Journey to Paris. I mention this, as he had proposed to send for them, but I advised him not to delay setting out on that account, for that having seen them, and also the recommendation of the Minister here, I thought it would be only the Loss of time. I have taken the Liberty of recommending him immediately to you to be introduced to the Congress and to Gen<sup>l</sup> Washington, from whom I doubt not but his abilities, long experience, & zeal for the American Cause will meet with all the attention and respect which they merit. Make my Compliments to all friends, & be assured, &c.,

S. DEANE.

Hon<sup>ble</sup> Rob<sup>t</sup> Morris, Esq<sup>r</sup>

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO PLEVILLE LE PELLEY.

Paris, 3<sup>d</sup> Sept<sup>r</sup>, 1777.

SIR,—Yours of the 23<sup>d</sup> inst<sup>t</sup> I rec<sup>d</sup>, and am much obliged to you & your Brother for the offers of service which you did me the honor of making, but the great number of officers who have gone to America, with the still greater number who have now become disciplined in that Country, have filled up all the Posts in the American Army, so that I really cannot advise your Brother to make so distant a voyage on so great an uncertainty. I doubt not of his abilities or his zeal, and it would really make me happy could I recommend the voyage to him with a certainty of being employed; but it is not in my Power as affairs are situated in America.

I have the honor to be with much respect, &c.,

S. DEANE.

Mons<sup>r</sup> Pleville Le Pelley.

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO BARNABAS DEANE.

Paris, 3<sup>d</sup> Sept<sup>r</sup>, 1777.

DEAR BROTHER,—I have so often wrote to you and the rest of my family without receiving any return that

I am almost discouraged continuing a correspondence, if it may be so called, supported only on one side. I have most impatiently expected an answer to my request, that Brother [Simeon] would come over & bring my son with him, but at length despair of either. This will be forwarded by Capt. Landy [Landais], a Gentleman worthy of y<sup>r</sup> acquaintance & attention. He has seen much service, & is a very honest as well as brave man. I therefore most strongly recommend him to your particular notice. I have ordered a few trifles to be sent you by Capt. Landay for my family. I can say nothing at present on Politics, nor need I, as you will probably have other Letters from me before you will receive this.

I am, &c.,

S. DEANE.

To Barnabas Deane.

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO THE SECRET COMMITTEE OF CONGRESS.

Paris, Sept<sup>r</sup> 3<sup>d</sup>, 1777.

GENTLEMEN,—Capt. Landais is the Bearer of this. He comes with the *Heureux*, loaded with stores for America. This cargo has, by a succession of obstacles thrown in the way, been detained from January last at a most prodigious expence. I hope, however, that it may finally arrive in season to be of essential service. Capt. Landais, whom I have mentioned in my former Letters, will offer his service to the United States. I must repeat here, what I have written before, that I find him to be a skilful seaman of long Experience in every Part of the World, of good judgment and the most unsuspecting honor & Probity. I can but consider him as a valuable acquisition to our Navy.

My agreement with M<sup>r</sup> Motieue [Monthieu], the owner of this ship, in case she should not be sold in America, is that she be despatched with a cargo of Tobacco as soon as possible, if the article is to be had; if not, with such articles as can be procured, as I have



engaged for the Freight outward & Homewards, & you are sensible of the necessity of having remittances by every opportunity. Whatever this ship may be Loaded with, I pray that the cargo may come to Mess<sup>rs</sup> Rodrique Hortalez & Co., as they have advanced for the arms and many other articles of this cargo over & above their other large advances. Tobacco is the best article at present in the Ports of France, or indeed any part of Europe, & must continue so for a very considerable time yet to come, most probably for 12 months. You will please to send me an acc<sup>t</sup> of the cargo, whatever it may be, that you ship in this vessel, & duplicates by others.

I have the Honor to be, &c.,

SILAS DEANE.

Honb<sup>le</sup> Secret Committee.

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO CAPT. PETER LANDAIS.

Paris, 5<sup>th</sup> Sept<sup>r</sup>, 1777.

CAPT. LANDAIS,

SIR,—Yours of the 15<sup>th</sup> & 20<sup>th</sup> ult<sup>o</sup> should have been answered sooner, but I rec<sup>d</sup> them only three days ago, & M<sup>r</sup> Montieu being determined to go himself for Marseilles, I determined to send to you by him, as the matter will now be finished, and I trust you will sail in a few days after his arrival. My advice is that you clear out in form for Saint Domingo, & be careful that you have no Papers on board that may shew the contrary except what are in your own Power, & these have always ready to be sunk in case of an attack or danger in a search. You will stand directly for the Continent of North America, and endeavour to fall in as far to the North as Portsmouth in New Hampshire, or Boston. On your arrival you are to apply to the authority or Magistrates of the Place where you may arrive, for assistance in securing the vessel & cargo for acc<sup>t</sup> of Congress, and you will immediately inform the Congress by

express of the Place you are at and the cargo on board and attend their Orders. With respect to the sale of the vessel, M<sup>r</sup> Montieu will give you his instructions. As you will tarry in the Country, if the vessel is sent Back, you are to urge the person who has the care of the Expedition to send her away as early as Possible & Procure a good Pilot for her return. You will be able to inform the Congress of the Reasons of y<sup>r</sup> delay more particularly than I can do in a Letter, but I have wrote them on the subject [in] the inclosed letter, which you will deliver with your own hand. Before sailing make out an exact acc<sup>t</sup> of the cargo w<sup>h</sup> you will have on board and the number of Tons it makes, also the number of Tons which the vessel will carry if intirely filled up, which I am uncertain whether the articles to be sent will do or not; but my desire is that you take as much on board as will be consistent with your sailing to advantage. If any artillery officers insist on going, you must order them to be disguised like marines or enter as common Passengers for St. Domingo. You will carefully avoid falling in with any English vessel of war, if Possible, but should you be attacked must defend yourself in the best manner & to the utmost.

With Esteem, I am, &c.,

S. DEANE.

*Thomas Mss.*

To ——— EYRIES.

Paris, 5<sup>th</sup> Sep<sup>r</sup>, 1777.

SIR,—M<sup>r</sup> Grand show'd me your Lett<sup>r</sup>, in which you demand his security for one half the Pacifique, & say that without it she shall not leave the Port. In answer I must remind you that you have rec<sup>d</sup> above ninety thousand Livres of me, for which I have your promise to be accountable, & that tho' I have impowered M<sup>r</sup> Beaumarchais to settle that affair in Justice, yet a Bill of his for only a part of that sum has not been paid. I therefore leave it with you to Judge whether your Demand is



or is not seasonable ; for the one Reason for being concerned at all in the Pacifique was to recover the large sum I had advanced, but I must still be kept out of that & pay y<sup>e</sup> ½ of the am<sup>t</sup> of the Pacifique, & that before I have been acquainted with the am<sup>ts</sup>, or whether they are agreeable to Capt. Hynson or not. I must decline having anything more to do in the affair, which I am inclined to for many Reasons. You mentioned in a former Lett<sup>r</sup> y<sup>te</sup> [that] you were willing to take the vessel on yourself. I must under the present Circumstances prefer your taking her, for I cannot engage to advance anything whilst our former affairs lye unsettled & whilst y<sup>e</sup> monies already advanced are unaccounted for. Capt. Hynson may be of as much service in the vessel if you own her as if owned by any other person, & I can answer for his fidelity.

I am, &c.,  
S. DEANE.

M<sup>r</sup> Eyries, Havre de Grace.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO CHRISTOPHER GADSDEN.

Paris, Sept<sup>r</sup> 5<sup>th</sup> 1777.

SIR,—M<sup>r</sup> Zollikofer proposes establishing a house of commerce in America. As he is connected with many Principal Houses both in Switzerland and France, I cant but think his proposal may be of very great advantage to the Country as well as himself, & therefore take the Liberty of recommending him to your good offices, should he make his residence in Charlestown or in your Province.

I have the honor to be, &c.,  
S. DEANE.

Col. Gadsden.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO MESSRS. NORTON AND BEAL.

Paris, Sept<sup>r</sup> 5<sup>th</sup> 1777.

GENTLEMEN,—M<sup>r</sup> Zollikofer proposes establishing a house of Commerce in America. Should he prefer any place in Virginia, I take the Liberty of recommending him to your Civilities as a Gentleman who has good Connections in Europe, both in France & Switzerland, having Concerns with the Principal Houses, & whose settling in America, will, I doubt not, be of Service to its Commercial Interest.

I am, &c.,

S. DEANE.

Mess<sup>rs</sup> Norton & Beal.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO MESSRS. DUCHE, REID, & CO.

Paris, Sept<sup>r</sup> 5<sup>th</sup> 1777.

GENTLEMEN,—Yours of the 26 ult<sup>o</sup> I had the honor of receiving, & should have answered it sooner, but by accident & hurry of business it was omitted. I inclose you a letter for Mess<sup>rs</sup> Norton & Beal of Virginia, & also for South Carolina. Wishing you success in y<sup>r</sup> adventures to America,

I have the honor to be, &c.,

S. DEANE.

Mess<sup>rs</sup> Duché, Reid, & C<sup>o</sup>  
Nantes.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO COLONEL CONWAY.

Paris, Sept. 7<sup>th</sup> 1777.

SIR,—I received yours of the 8<sup>th</sup> of August last, but have received no Letter from Count Rica since I had the honor of his company here. The Rank of Brig<sup>r</sup>, conferred on your Son by the Congress, is the third Rank in the Continental Army, which has a Capt. Gen<sup>l</sup>, Major Generals, & Brigadiers, so that I think him well



placed ; & as his will be an active department, I doubt not he will be soon distinguished & promoted. Ticonderoga was abandoned by the Americans early in July last, since which we are without any certain Intelligence. My compliments to Count Rica, & tell him I shall be glad of a Letter from him if he has sufficiently considered the Long Letter I wrote him in June last.

I am, &c.,

S. DEANE.

Col. Conway.

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO JOHN ROSS.

Paris, Sept<sup>r</sup> 7<sup>th</sup>, 1777.

M<sup>r</sup>. ROSS,

SIR,—I have omitted answering several of your last Letters in consequence of the uncertainty in which I have been as to several matters to which they related. I remain in the same situation still. You are sensible there is no doing any thing without money, and so considerable an object as the ship you propose requires a great deal, which is not, I find, after stating our funds and Engagements, in our Power to advance. I could have wrote you this some days since, but I had hopes of obtaining something in the money way that might enable us to undertake what I am very desirous of having effected. I am not without some hopes still of doing something, but the obstacles are so many that I am almost discouraged. The sum we advanced for you lessened our Capital, and I am sorry to say there is at present no prospect of our receiving any thing from the Congress Agents at Nantes. This Capital was not money remitted us from America, but received from our Friends here. The Agents have not even remitted the money ordered by Congress for our support, & to this neglect of theirs, Morris & Penette & Gruel, supposing us destitute, have added insult in giving out that we could have no money but through their Agency, & there-

fore we must comply with their Measures. M<sup>r</sup> Lee has not, I presume, been in a situation to put matters on a different Footing or he most certainly would have done it. Thus circumstanced as to money, we must be very careful of our Engagements, & form none but what we can punctually fulfil & we are obliged at the same time to engage for clothing, &c., to a large amount. I shall confer with M<sup>r</sup> Williams & by him give you my thoughts about sending out the Prize Brig. I send you inclosed an acc<sup>t</sup> of Capt. Bell's People, the time they were in service & the monies they rec<sup>d</sup> of him. As M<sup>r</sup> Morris has not advanced the monies he engaged for, he ought to settle this acc<sup>t</sup> at least, but I apprehend it will be to no purpose to apply to him; if, therefore, the people will settle on just Terms, viz., on Continental Established wages, I pray you to settle it & charge the sum to Mess<sup>rs</sup> Willing, Morris, & C<sup>o</sup>, at whose orders this expedition was undertook, the particulars of which I will give you by M<sup>r</sup> Williams. Pray inform us if you have any prospect of replacing the money advanced by us or any part thereof; a part of it will essentially oblige us at this time.

I am, &c.,

S. DEANE.

*Thomas M<sup>s</sup>.*

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TO CAPT. LAMBERT WICKES.

Paris, Sept<sup>r</sup> 9<sup>th</sup>, 1777.

CAPT. WICKES,

SIR,—We received yours informing of your being ready for sea & that orders had been rec<sup>d</sup> for your leaving the Port. We hope this, by Capt. Bell who goes express, will find you still at St Maloes. We send by him Dispatches for America, w<sup>h</sup> you will take the Charge of, & have them ready for being sunk in case of accident. We advise your settling the Bills for your repairs, &c., & that you draw for the amount on us, forwarding at the same time the Bills to us & Capt. Bell. We have



purchased of Mess<sup>rs</sup> Desegray, Beauguard, Fils & C<sup>o</sup>, who will deliver it. We advise your going for Portsmouth in New Hampshire, or Boston, as we think you will by that Rout be the least exposed to meet with vessels of the Enemy of superior Force. Our Letters to the Congress will do justice to your conduct since under our observation & Direction, & the obstructions you have met with have given us pain. It is with pleasure we inform the Congress that nothing has been wanting on your Part to render your cruises in these seas as successful as we could have wished for. Wishing you a prosperous voyage, we are, with much Esteem, Sir, yours, &c.,

B. FRANKLIN,  
S. DEANE,  
ARTHUR LEE.

P. S. The officer who comes with Capt. Bell to take a Passage with you for America will act, if occasion requires, as a marine on board. He is recommended as a brave man, and we have agreed to give him a Passage. Hope it will not be inconvenient to you, and that he may be of service as well on his Passage as after his arrival.

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO CAPT. HENRY JOHNSON.

Paris, Sept<sup>r</sup> 9<sup>th</sup>, 1777.

CAPT. JOHNSON,

SIR,—Yours informing us of your being ready for sea we rec<sup>d</sup>, and by Capt. Bell advise you to settle your acc<sup>ts</sup> of Disbursements & give Bills on us for the amount, forwarding to us at the same time copies thereof, after which you are to take the first favourable opportunity to go for America, endeavouring to make either the Port of Portsmouth in New Hampshire, or Boston, as the most likely to avoid the Enemies vessels of a superior Force. The Dispatches sent you, you will keep in readiness to be sunk in case of Danger, and on your

safe arrival instantly forward them to the Congress. It gives us pain that you are obliged to return without an opportunity of more effectually annoying our Enemy & advancing your own Fortune at the same time. We shall with pleasure acquaint the Congress that your Conduct has been such as merits our approbation, and we doubt not they will take notice of our representations on the subject, by giving you a more favorable opportunity of distinguishing yourself in the service of your Country. With respect to your affairs at Morlaix, it was never our intention that you sh<sup>d</sup> apply to any other than the house of M. Cornie & C<sup>o</sup>, with whose reputation we are well satisfied; nor was M<sup>r</sup> Deane's letter other than merely accepting M<sup>r</sup> Day's proposals of Correspondence generally, and without any intention of Putting any affairs particularly under his direction. We are, wishing you a Prosperous voyage, with due respect, Sir, y<sup>r</sup> most Obed<sup>t</sup> H. Serv<sup>ts</sup>,

B. FRANKLIN,  
S. DEANE,  
ARTHUR LEE.

P. S. You will please to send us an Acc<sup>t</sup> of what sums you rec<sup>d</sup> on acc<sup>t</sup> of Prizes, & how much of it has been applied to repairs of y<sup>r</sup> vessels.

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO MESSRS. CORNIE & CO.

Paris, Sept. 10<sup>th</sup>, 1777.

GENTLEMEN,—We have directed Cap<sup>t</sup> Johnson to draw on us for the amount of the Sums furnished by you for his Disbursements, which Bills will be duly hon<sup>d</sup>. In answer to yours to Doctor Franklin, we have to assure you that we have ever had the fullest confidence in your House, nor ever had any Thoughts of changing for another whilst we supposed, as we ever have, that our Correspondence was mutually agreeable. With respect to M<sup>r</sup> Deane's Letter to M<sup>r</sup> David, it was in



consequence of several from him, soliciting generally a Correspondence, but M<sup>r</sup> Deane had not any Design of putting our affairs at Morlaix under other than your Direction; but as it seems the Gentleman has understood it differently, M<sup>r</sup> Deane wishes by this conveyance to undeceive him.

We are, with much respect, &c., &c.,

B. FRANKLIN,

S. DEANE.

Mess<sup>rs</sup> V. Cornie M<sup>m</sup> fils, a Morlaix.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO ——— DAVID.

Paris, Sept. 10<sup>th</sup>, 1777.

SIR,—The Commissioners have sometime since had Concerns with Mess<sup>rs</sup> Cornie & C<sup>o</sup>, and have received the fullest satisfaction from that House. Their affairs, therefore, at Morlaix are under the particular Direction of that House. They are, notwithstanding, sensible of your offers of Service, and will at any Time be glad to receive any Intelligence from you which you may judge material without putting you to too much trouble or expence, & in return, if in their way, will render you the like Service in return.

I have the honor to remain, &c., &c., &c.,

S. DEANE.

Mons. David,  
Morlaix.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO ANDREW LIMOZIN.

Paris, Sept<sup>r</sup> 10<sup>th</sup>, 1777.

M<sup>r</sup> LIMOZIN,\*

SIR,—It has been represented by M<sup>r</sup> Eyries & Cap<sup>t</sup> Hynson that certain Letters sent the latter under Cover to the former, by the name of "Delacice," came into your hands by accident & were sent to a different

\* An agent of Chaumont's at Havre de Grace.

place. As there appears to have been some misunderstanding on the subject, I take the Liberty to ask of you the Particulars of that affair, as I apprehend some misrepresentation may possibly have been made thro want of an explanation on the Subject, and I consider it as common Justice to give you notice of it, that you may explain the transaction, as I doubt not you can to satisfaction.

I have the honor to remain, with due respect, &c.,

S. DEANE.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO CAPT. JOSEPH HYNSON.

Paris, Sept. 10th, 1777.

CAPT. HYNSON,

SIR,—I rec'd yours of the 6th yesterday, and the same Time was told by Mr. Eyries' Freind here that he would go no farther in any Concern with the Pacifique, either on Sale or Freight, as he had some misunderstanding with you. He has really, perhaps, some difficulty with me, as my Views are not quite agreeable to his. I am sorry for your disappointment, and the more so as I have at this moment no other prospect of providing for you, All equipments being for the present Suspended in France. I wish you to explain to Me what this Gentleman's Views really are. I offered to Freight his Vessel, & have a Cargo Actually ready, but I am at the same Time very willing to be quit of any further Concern with him. I have wrote to Mr. Limozin on the Subject of the Detention of my Letters, & expect his Answer, as also a Letter from you in Answer To This.

I am, with due Respect,

Sir, your most Obedt. &

Very Hum. Servt.,

S. DEANE.

To Capt. Joseph Hynson at Havre du Grace.

*Thomas Mss.*



TO SIMEON DEANE.

Paris, Sept<sup>r</sup> 10<sup>th</sup>, 1777.

DEAR BROTHER,—Yours of the 9<sup>th</sup> I rec<sup>d</sup>, & am rejoiced that you are arived in health, and that I shall soon have the pleasure of seeing you in Paris. I Lodge at present at Passy, about one League distant. M<sup>r</sup> Laland is not in Paris at Present, but I shall send him a Copy of the Bill. You will inquire for the House of M<sup>r</sup> Ray de Chaumont at Passy, where I will procure you Lodgings. I am in haste, D<sup>r</sup> Brother, &c.,

S. DEANE.

S<sup>n</sup> Deane, Esq<sup>r</sup>*Thomas Mss.*

TO CAPT. BOYD.

Paris, Sept<sup>r</sup> 10<sup>th</sup>, 1777.

CAPT. BOYD,

SIR,—I received yours of the 3<sup>d</sup>, & have no objection to your preferring that employ which will turn most to your advantage. On the Contrary, I am glad of it. At the same time must expect that if in your power, without hurting you, you will replace the money advanced you by M<sup>r</sup> Eyries; But if it is inconvenient to you to do it here, that you will do it in America, to the Congress, when in your Power, As the money advanced is theirs, and I am accountable for it to them. I congratulate you on y<sup>r</sup> escape from the Enemy, and that you are in the way of finding employ; & in any respect in which I can be of service to you, rest assured of my serving you with the utmost pleasure. I am, &c.,

S. DEANE.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO THE COMMITTEE OF CONGRESS ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS.

Paris, Sept<sup>r</sup> 10<sup>th</sup>, 1777.

GENTLEMEN,—This will be handed to you by M<sup>r</sup> Francis [de Francey], who is agent to Mess<sup>rs</sup> Roderique

Hortalez & C<sup>o</sup>. You will see by the Bills of Lading the Quantity of stores shipped by that house, and make some judgment of their considerable amount. The vessel in which Mr. Francis comes is loaded with stores which were long time engaged, but by a succession of obstacles have been until this detained. I still hope they will come in safety & in season to be of service. The ship will be offerd you to purchase if she suit you, and if not it will be equally agreeable to have her returned on the owners' acc<sup>t</sup>. I could not say any thing to purchasing a ship without knowing more of her than I know of this. I have, therefore, left it to your option to pay the Price demanded or the Freight. The latter is to be what is at this time customary in vessels of such Force, which not being precisely fixed is submitted to M<sup>r</sup> Chaumont by the advice & consent of my Colleagues. It will probably be ab<sup>t</sup> 250 Liv<sup>s</sup> p. Ton of Goods to America & back to France. It will not exceed. Mess<sup>rs</sup> Roderique Hortalez & C<sup>o</sup> have other vessels which will follow this in a short time, which they want to have despatched with Tobacco, agreeable to what they formerly wrote you, & M<sup>r</sup> Francis comes partly on that acc<sup>t</sup>; must therefore pray you to furnish him with the means of procuring the quantity he will want for them in season. The Cargo of the Therese, sent by the way of S<sup>t</sup> Domingo, is I hope by this time arrived. It was so valuable that it was thought most prudent to send it by that Rout, as it would run no risk in getting there, whence it might in diff<sup>t</sup> Bottoms be got in to the Continent, without the Considerable risk of going direct. As the vessels of Mess<sup>rs</sup> Hortalez & C<sup>o</sup> will arrive at a time when dispatch will be of the utmost consequence, they are desirous to have their Cargoes ready on their arrival. By those vessels will write you particularly on this subject, & in the mean time have the honor to be, &c.,

S. DEANE.

Hon<sup>ble</sup> Committee  
of Foreign Affairs.

*Thomas Mss.*



TO CAPT. PETER LANDAIS.

Paris, 10<sup>th</sup> Sept., 1777.

CAPT. LANDAIS,

SIR,—I conclude that by the rec<sup>t</sup> of this you will be ready for sea. I have not answered y<sup>r</sup> Letters because I said every thing to M<sup>r</sup> Montieu requisite on the subject. M<sup>r</sup> Francis brings you this & takes a passage with you for America. My advice is as formerly, that you will sail for Portsmouth in New Hampshire, or Boston, unless you should on y<sup>r</sup> Passage gain intelligence that the English Fleet should be in those seas. Should that be the case, go for Charlestown, S. Carolina. I would advise you to avoid speaking with any English men of war on y<sup>r</sup> Passage, & by no means suffer a search unless forced to it by a superior Force, in which case you will destroy the Papers which show y<sup>r</sup> real destination. You will take out Papers & certificates of every kind for S<sup>t</sup> Domingo, to which place it will be best to go in case you are driven off the coast, in preference to Martinico formerly mentioned. M<sup>r</sup> Francis, on y<sup>r</sup> arrival, will take the care of Delivering the Cargo to the Congress, & you will present them my Letters & Depend on being generously rewarded & promoted for y<sup>r</sup> good services. I must forbid any one land officer to pass in the ship on any consideration whatever, as I have just rec<sup>d</sup> positive orders to the contrary, which I may not explain; but you may, if M<sup>r</sup> Montieu urges their going, show this Letter to him, which I hope will be satisfactory; indeed they must not on any terms be permitted to go out to America. The Cargo having been furnished by M<sup>r</sup> Beaumarchais, & he having many affairs to settle in America, it is on that acc<sup>t</sup> that M<sup>r</sup> Francis goes out, & I hope he will be an agreeable companion on the Passage, &c.

I am, &amp;c.,

S. DEANE.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO BARNABAS DEANE.

Paris, 10<sup>th</sup> Sept<sup>r</sup>, 1777.

DEAR BROTHER,—My last letter from you was in Jan<sup>y</sup>, the only one indeed rec<sup>d</sup> since I left you. This will be handed you by M<sup>r</sup> Francis, a young Gentleman of this City, who I recommend to your Particular notice & civilities. He is charged with affairs of very considerable importance in the agency of Mess<sup>rs</sup> Roderique Hortalez, & C<sup>o</sup>, who have supplied the Continent with very considerable quantity of stores, & to whom I have great & Particular obligations. Any kindness you show him or service it may be in y<sup>r</sup> Power to render him, I shall consider as done myself.

I am, &amp;c.,

S. DEANE.

Barnabas Deane, Esq<sup>r</sup>*Thomas Mss.*

TO MESSRS. NORTON AND BEAL.

Paris, Sept<sup>r</sup> 10<sup>th</sup>, 1777.

GENTLEMEN,—I take the Liberty in this to recommend to your particular notice the Bearer, M<sup>r</sup> Francis, a young Gentleman of this City, for whom I have much regard, as well personally as on acc<sup>t</sup> of his connections here. He will probably have very considerable affairs in Virginia in the Tobacco way, as he is agent for the house of Roderique Hortalez, & C<sup>o</sup>, which has advanced largely for the supplies of our Country, and will probably make some tarry in America to obtain & forward their remittances. As this will probably be in y<sup>r</sup> way, I flatter myself y<sup>r</sup> acquaintance with this Gentleman may be a service of mutual service & Pleasure. I have the honor to be, with the greatest respect, &c.,

S. DEANE.

Mess<sup>rs</sup> Norton & Beal.*Thomas Mss.*



FROM THOMAS MORRIS.

Mr. Morris presents his comp<sup>ts</sup> to Mr. Deane, and would be glad to know at what hour he can see him to morrow, as he has Letters\* for him from Philadelphia wh<sup>h</sup> he is particularly desired to deliver with his own hands. Mr. Morris must acquaint Mr. Deane that these Letters concern the Commissioners in General which he informed Mr. Lee of last night.

Paris, Sep<sup>r</sup> 15<sup>th</sup>, 1777.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO THOMAS MORRIS.

Passy, Sept<sup>r</sup> 18<sup>th</sup>, 1777.

SIR,—I wrote you on Tuesday the moment I received yours of the 15<sup>th</sup>, informing you that I should be at home through the day until 5 o'clock. My servant was told you were gone to the country for 3 days; being informed yesterday that you were still in Paris, I sent my valet to pray you would send or bring me the Letters you refer to in yours; unfortunately you were out. I send him again to pray you would favour me with them this afternoon. If inconvenient for you to come out to Passy, you may safely send them to me by him.

I am, &c.,

S. DEANE.

Th<sup>os</sup> Morris, Esq<sup>r</sup>

*Thomas Mss.*

To ——— SETOREF.

Passy, 19th Sept., 1777.

SIR,—The Commerce between France & America is at Present very Beneficial to those Concerned, & I am always ready to do every thing in my Power to Promote it.

\* Including the one from R. Morris countenancing resistance on the part of his brother, should the Commissioners proceed to depose him from the agency.

No Article sells better then Salt & Coarse Goods & Sail Cloth, Cordage, &c. If your friend will engage, I would advise him to send for Carolina or Virginia ; or if to the Northward to Portsmouth, in New Hampshire, where he will find a good Port. Col. Langdon is a principal Merch<sup>t</sup> there ; M<sup>r</sup> Cushing or M<sup>r</sup> Williams, at Boston ; & M<sup>r</sup> B. Deane, a Brother of mine, in Connecticut, the Best Port of which is New London ; in Virginia the House of Mess<sup>rs</sup> Norton & Beal ; these can recommend him to other of their Friends. The general Direction as to Merchandize Proper is to attend to the Common & useful Articles, & not to Costly & luxurious ones—Tin plates, Copper, Lead, Steel, Anchors, &c., of the heavy Sort. Clothes of every Price under about 16 Livres pr Aune & Linnens will find a Quick & large sale.

I shall be happy in rendering you or your Friends any Service in my Power, & meantime have the Honor to remain with much Respect, &c., &c.,

S. DEANE.

To Mons Setoref, Bank<sup>r</sup>, Rue de Mail a Paris.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO MESSRS. PLAIRNE AND PENET.

Paris, 19th Sept., 1777.

GENTLEMEN,—I should sooner replied to yours of the 21<sup>st</sup> Ultimo, but waited the return of M<sup>r</sup> Williams. M<sup>r</sup> R. Morris in his Letter of the 31<sup>st</sup> Jan<sup>y</sup> last, says : “ I have now directed Mess<sup>rs</sup> Plairne, Penet & Co., to Acc<sup>t</sup> with you for the whole n<sup>t</sup> Proceeds of Eighty Six Hogsheads of Tobacco by this Ship,” &c., &c. If you have rec<sup>d</sup> contrary Orders, you are Justified in accounting otherways, but I presume you have not, as M<sup>r</sup> Lee wrote me you assured him you would account with me therefor, but a few days before. M<sup>r</sup> T. Morris has never accounted to me for the Tobacco. I have, therefore, to expect it from you, unless you can produce Orders from M<sup>r</sup> Rob<sup>t</sup> Morris



to the Contrary. Your answer will much oblige, Gent<sup>n</sup>, &c.

S. DEANE.

To Mess<sup>r</sup> Plairne & Pennet, Nantes.

*Thomas Mss.*

To ——— BRONQUIER.

Paris, Sept. 19<sup>th</sup>, 1777.

SIR,—I should sooner have replied to the Letter you did me the Honour to write the 2<sup>d</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup>, but the Hurry of other Dispatches prevented. With respect to your vessel proposed for America, I advise you to send her out sometime in November, before which we shall have further Intelligence from America, & be able to Judge better of the Port to which she may be sent with the greatest safety. As to the Cargo, almost every kind of Coarse Goods will sell at a high Price in every Port of America; in particular, Woolen Cloths of different Prices, from 4 to about 16 or 18 Liv<sup>rs</sup> per Aune. Blankets, Woolen Stockings which are of the Manufactures of Languedoc, Linnens of about 2 to 4 Livres pr Aune, Sail Cloth, Cordage, Steel in Barr, Lead, Tin Plates, Woolen Cards & Cotton Cards, Iron Wire for Cards, Nails, &c., &c. If you determine on Prosecuting the Voyage, I refer you to M<sup>r</sup> M<sup>c</sup>Creary, by whom I will write, on whose intelligence you may rely, As he is well acquainted in America. I have the highest Esteem for your Brother, & am sensibly hurt for his Misfortunes. But as Affairs are now situated, I would advise him to suspend for the Present the thoughts of going to America a few weeks. Two or Three Months at the farthest will put us in a better State to Judge of those Affairs than we are at Present.

The next news we receive will undoubtedly inform us how the Campaign is like to turn out, After which we may Determine with more Certainty on Subjects of this kind. I shall write you again in a few Days by

M<sup>r</sup> M<sup>c</sup>Creary if anything new arrives from America. In the mean time I have the Honor to be with the highest esteem,

Sir, &c.,

S. DEANE.

Mons<sup>r</sup> Bronquier.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO SIR ROBERT FINLAY.

Paris, Sept. 19<sup>th</sup>, 1777.

DEAR SIR,—I rec<sup>d</sup> yours of the 8<sup>th</sup> dated at Nantes. I cannot Advise you to speculate largely in Nankins, at this Season. Rhubarb, Pepper, & Salt Petre are good Articles, & the Demand is Considerable, especially for the two former; the latter is now manufactur'd in the Country, so that I cannot be so positive in Advising a large Quantity of it, but the last Prices for Pepper & Rhubarb in America were, for Rhubarb, from 20 to 30/ per h Dollars at 6/, & for Pepper, from 10/ to 12/ pr lb. Jesuits Bark is a good Article. If you will favour me with a general List of the Bengal Goods to be sold at L'Orient, I shall be able to point out which are most likely to Answer in America, & to inform you whether we shall have any Ord<sup>rs</sup> that way. We have nothing from Am<sup>a</sup> since the News bro<sup>t</sup> by M<sup>r</sup> M<sup>c</sup>Creary; if you receive any, shall be oblig<sup>d</sup> to you for the Communication of it to us, & I will do the same to you. I am with much Respect, &c.,

S. DEANE.

Sir Robert Finlay [Merchant and Banker at Bordeaux].

*Thomas Mss.*

TO MESSRS. LAGOANEN & CO.

Paris, Sept<sup>r</sup> 20<sup>th</sup>, 1777.

GENTLEMEN,—Your Favor of the 30<sup>th</sup> ult<sup>o</sup> I received, & am much obliged to you for the Favors



shown Capt<sup>t</sup> Cunningham, who I hoped indeed had gone direct to America, but conclude he must have met with some misfortune in his voyage, which obliged him to go for Spain. The Necessary articles to repair his vessel for the voyage are, I hope, by this Time supplied, for which Capt. Cunningham's Bills on Mess<sup>r</sup> Gardroquis of Bilboa will be honored, as they have been wrote to on the subject. I thank you for your kind offers of Service, & have the honor to remain, with the highest Esteem,

Gentlemen, yours, &c.,

S. DEANE.

Mess<sup>rs</sup> Lagoanen & C<sup>o</sup>, Mecr<sup>ts</sup>, Coruna, Spain.

*Thomas Mss.*

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FROM JOHN ROSS.

Nantes, 20<sup>th</sup> Septem<sup>r</sup>, 1777.

HONOURABLE GENTLEMEN,—I only this instant received your very respected favour of 13<sup>th</sup>, and particularly attend to your pressing demand of the Sum you assisted me with to accomplish a speedy execution of orders received by me, Similar to that of your own, much *wanted also* by our Country, and I assure you, Gentlemen, In conformity it has been applied, & to no other purpose. Nevertheless, am exceedingly uneasy not to have it now in my power to replace it, the Situation of the American Coast retarding the dispatch of a valluable property intended for me. But you may depend the first public funds I receive shall be immediately disposed of & remited for your Accommodation. This I mentioned to M<sup>r</sup> Deane in a letter of the 11<sup>th</sup> Inst., And as I perceive you are in want of the money at this time, Shoud be exceedingly glad you could command the sum on Interest from some of your Banker friends, untill property reach me to replace it, which from many circumstances I have every *assurance & reason* to expect soon.

With particular respect, I am, Honourable Gentlemen

Your very Obed<sup>t</sup> Serv<sup>t</sup>  
J<sup>N</sup><sup>o</sup> ROSS.

*Thomas Mss.*

[To the Commissioners.]

N. B.—In a few days shall have the pleasure to see you at Paris, when you'll be informed in what manner your money has been *applied*.

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO CAPT. JOSEPH HYNSON.

Paris, Sept<sup>r</sup> 21<sup>st</sup>, 1777.

CAP<sup>t</sup> HYNSON,

SIR,—As M<sup>r</sup> Eyries intirely declines compleating the affair of the Pacifique on such terms as I can consent to, and as I have now no prospect of equipping or being permitted to equip any more Vessels from France than those already provided for, I know not what to say to you on your situation, or what to advise in so great a state of uncertainty. But if you can have any offer that will be of advantage, advise you to accept of it. If you have any American Sailors at Havre who want passage, they can be sent to Nantes, to care of M<sup>r</sup> Williams. I shall write M<sup>r</sup> Folger tomorrow, also to go to Nantes, if he is not otherways engaged, but I still think it will be better for you to Engage with M<sup>r</sup> Eyries to go in the Pacifique on his own acc<sup>t</sup>, as he fitts her out himself for America, where, when you arrive, you may be at Liberty to pursue your own course, & will be able to find employ in your Country's Service.

I am, with Esteem, Sir, your most Obed<sup>t</sup> & Very Hum<sup>le</sup> Serv<sup>t</sup>,

S. DEANE.

To Capt. Joseph Hynson, at Havre de Grace.

*Thomas Mss.*



To ——— BRONQUIER.

Paris, Sep<sup>t</sup> 22<sup>d</sup>, 1777.

SIR,—I wrote you on the 19<sup>th</sup>, to which beg leave to refer you for any information on that subject more particularly than what I have already wrote in my last. We are still without any news on which any dependence can be put, but are in daily expectations of receiving important advice from that Country, which I shall do myself the honor of writing to you as soon as rec<sup>d</sup>. I have the honor to be, with the greatest Esteem,

Yours, &c.,

S. DEANE.

M<sup>r</sup> Bronquier.

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*Thomas Mss.*

TO MESSRS. PLAIRNE, PENET & CO.

Paris, Sept. 22<sup>d</sup>, 1777.

SIR,—I send you enclosed a copy of my last, & pray you to favor me with your answer as early as possible, and that if you have rec<sup>d</sup> any order from M<sup>r</sup> Robert Morris, different from those to me, you will let me have a copy of them that the affair may be explained & finished. I have the honor to remain, &c.

S. DEANE.

Messrs. Plairne, Penet & C<sup>o</sup>

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*Thomas Mss.*

TO CAPT. THOMAS TRUXTUN.

Paris, Sept<sup>r</sup> 25<sup>th</sup>, 1777.

SIR,—I received your Favours of the 20<sup>th</sup>, & am obliged to you for your kind offer, & now send you a Letter to the Hon. Rob<sup>t</sup> Morris, Esq<sup>r</sup>, which I pray you to forward to him instantly after your arrival in America. It is of some Consequence, & if you should

meet with any accident, pray it may be destroyed. I am, wishing you a successful voyage,

Sir, your most Obed<sup>t</sup> & Very Humble Serv<sup>t</sup>

S. DEANE.

Capt. Truxton, of the Mars at Nantes.

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO CAPT. PETER LANDAIS.

Paris, 26<sup>th</sup> Sept., 1777.

CAPT. LANDAIS,

SIR,—When I recommended M<sup>r</sup> Frances to take a Passage in the Ship with you from Marseilles, I had no thought of any Difficulty, nor do I now understand how any could have been made. I wrote you by M<sup>r</sup> Montieu, & referr'd you to him for an explanation of the reasons of M<sup>r</sup> Frances going out to America. I must still refer you to him, & have only to say that M<sup>r</sup> Frances is going on Business of Consequence, as well to M<sup>r</sup> Beaumarchais as to the Congress, & I must pray you to accommodate him in the best manner.

Agreeable to my last Letter & that any Difficulty subsisting may be got over, I must assure you that M<sup>r</sup> Frances's passing in the vessel shall be of none, not the least Prejudice to you on any acc<sup>t</sup> whatever. I hope you will consider the importance of the Cargo to America, & be assured that nothing shall be wanting on my Part to make you every satisfaction you can wish or desire, if the vessel can be got away and arrive in safety.

I am, &c.,

S. DEANE,

*Thomas Mss*

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TO CAPT. JOSEPH HYNSON.

Paris, 27<sup>th</sup> Sept., 1777.

CAPT. HYNSON,

SIR,—I am surprized Eyries should say that he offered me the ship on my own Terms, or that he had



no differences with you. He has repeatedly wrote that he would not have you go in her if he was concerned, but there were other objections if these were removed, which in one Word amount to a prohibition from the high Powers to send out any Vessel armed, or loaded with Arms, therefore every Speculation of that Nature is at an End. I should otherways have depended on your going in her. As to my mentioning your finding employ elsewhere, I had no reference to any thing more than that as many vessels are fitting out for America at this time, you might doubtless find employ to advantage; if not, I can procure you a Birth in a Merchant Ship as Master for America, which is all that will be in my power to do. I ask your answer pr Return of Post Whither you will go in the Merchant Vessel or not. She will be bound for Virginia.

I am, Sir, your most Obed<sup>t</sup> & very Hum<sup>le</sup> Serv<sup>t</sup>,  
 SILAS DEANE.

To Capt. Joseph Hynson, Havre de Grace.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Covering Letters and Copies to Robert Morris, Esq.

Paris, 27<sup>th</sup> Sept<sup>r</sup>, 1777.

SIR,—Being informed that the Congress have been made to believe that the Conduct of M<sup>r</sup> Thomas Morris has been misrepresented by the Commissioners, & particularly by me, and it being possible from the part which M<sup>r</sup> Robert Morris has taken in support of his Brother that he might not wish to comply with my reasonable request that he would Communicate to them what I have wrote (though but a small part of what I might have written) to him on this disagreeable subject, I take the Liberty of troubling your Excell<sup>y</sup> with the inclosed, and of desiring that you will peruse & afterwards seal & deliver it. I ask this with no wish that you should shew me an undue partiality. I desire only common Justice, which your distinguished

Candor & Generosity of sentiment will engage you to obtain for every absent man. Respecting M<sup>r</sup> Robert Morriss, I hope & believe that he has been grossly deceived, and that he will soon discover & acknowledge his Error. I pray you to make my most respectable Compliments agreeable to your amiable lady, & to assure yourself that I am, with the utmost Esteem and Devotion,

Your Excellencys, &c.,

S. DEANE.

His Excellency, J. Hancock, Esq<sup>r</sup>

*Thomas Mss.*

ENCLOSURES.

Paris, 23d September, 1777.

DEAR SIR,—Your Brother, M<sup>r</sup> Tho<sup>s</sup> Morriss, came to Town the 14<sup>th</sup>, & I was informed that Evening that he had Letters from you to me, & also Lett<sup>rs</sup> in which the Com. were jointly concerned. I have since his arrival repeatedly applied to him to obtain the Letters, but without success, nor has he Communicated any thing to the Commissioners, nor even seen any of them except M<sup>r</sup> Lee by accident at a Public walk a few days since. A Friend of mine showed me a Lett<sup>r</sup> from M<sup>r</sup> Ross. N<sup>o</sup> 1 is an Extract from it. This is all I shall probably know of the Contents, as I have no reason to hope that the original will ever come to my hands. This you will suppose is sufficient to inform me in what manner the candid and friendly part I have acted towards you has been represented, and how you have resented it. I should be less surprized were I not assured that Mr. Bromfield was arrived, & that you must have rec<sup>d</sup> my Lett<sup>r</sup> by him, Copy of w<sup>h</sup> I inclose for your reperusal. I little thought at the Time that I was doing what would occasion the Loss of your Friendship, & draw on me your reproaches. Affected as I am by the Consequences, for I have [ever] held your Friendship & the share I tho't I had in it both honorable & agreeable, yet were I again in the same situation, I would again



act the same part, which you, I am confident, will approve, when you are acquainted with the whole Truth of which you cannot be long ignorant. Your Brother's Conduct cannot at this Time be a secret in America; it is therefore unnecessary for me to say one word on the subject. As many of the Commissioners Letters may have failed; I take Liberty of inclosing extract of a Letter wrote jointly by D<sup>r</sup> Franklin & myself in March last, in which we sent an extract of a Letter from M<sup>r</sup> Lee, who had been at Nantes, & was then at Bordeaux. This Letter was to the Committee & Consequently to Congress. We wrote one also previous to this to the Com., just before M<sup>r</sup> Lee's going to Nantes, in which your Brother's Conduct was mentioned; but you will observe my Lett<sup>r</sup> by M<sup>r</sup> Bromfield, of the 5<sup>th</sup> of January, was the first in which I had mentioned your Brother's Conduct as being in my opinion dead [bad] beyond recovery, & that this Letter was directed to you particularly. I might indeed have wrote you at large, had [I] been willing to have wrote you from the Reports of those who saw him in Lond<sup>n</sup>, but the prejudices I had in favor of his abilities, as well as the Friendship I had, & permit me still to entertain for you, prevented my saying more than that "I feared pleasure had got too strong hold of him," which you will find repeated in my Letters of Nov<sup>r</sup> to Dec<sup>r</sup> last, and your Letters to me expressed the same fear on your part. Letters from M<sup>r</sup> Ross, at Hamburgh, & from very respectable Characters in diff<sup>t</sup> parts of Europe, would justify much more than what I have ever said or wrote to you or to the Committee. To the Latter I wrote Jointly with my Colleagues.

I am informed that you complain of me that I wrote to the Congress before I informed you of your Brother's Behavior; as to this the Dates of my Letters will shew you are in an Error, w<sup>h</sup> I suppose was occasioned by some of my Lett<sup>rs</sup> being intercepted, & others arriving without duplicates of the first. I refer you to your Lett<sup>r</sup> by Cap<sup>t</sup> Bell for

what were your feelings and Distress on receiving intelligence what was your Brother's mode of Life, and the Resolutions you took upon it; also to your subsequent Letters to M<sup>r</sup> Ross on the same subject, both of which were wrote in Consequence of other Intelligence than mine. I must also refer you to my Letter by Cap<sup>t</sup> Hammond, submit to your cool & candid Determination whether I have acted the part of a Friend or an Enemy. I confess to you that Capt. Wickes at that Time gave me real Hopes that matters were not so bad as both he as well as I and every one else have since found them to have been. I refer you to Capt. Wickes on this subject if you are still in doubt—I mean with respect to my Conduct in this affair. I am informed—for I have not the advantage of your Lett<sup>r</sup> directed for me, open to your Brother—that it is insinuated that interested & private views influenced me to write as I did, & that the fixing M<sup>r</sup> Williams at Nantes was the object I had in view. I am sorry you should be so imposed upon. The Consequences must ultimately be more prejudicial to you than to any other person; meantime, as a man of honor, I assure you I have no Interest or Connection in Mr. Williams's Business, nor have I engaged in the smallest private Concern, except what you have been acquainted with, & which you know was in Consequence of your Lett<sup>rs</sup> of June, 1776.

M<sup>r</sup> Williams came to France to visit D<sup>r</sup> Franklin. He was in a good way in England, when he was entering into Business with a Capital house in the Sugar Making Business. England was disagreeable to him solely on acc<sup>t</sup> of the animosities which prevailed among Individuals on acc<sup>t</sup> of the public Quarrel. The Stores which I had engaged, which were sent in the Mercury & Theresa, were at Nantes, where matters had been so conducted that you must suppose I had no Confidence in the Managers. On this occasion I applied to M<sup>r</sup> Williams, as a Friend, to make a Journey to Nantes, examine Goods, and see them shipped. He left Paris



without intending to tarry longer than to finish this Business. But his Conduct at Nantes was so much the reverse of what had preceded, that every one who wished well to our affairs desired that he might be Continued there; I needed no sollicitation, the Interest of my Country was my sole motive. I knew he served it faithfully, and I knew him generous and disinterested. Yes, Sir, disinterested, & you will acknowledge it when you are informed that what he exacted of us was hardly a sufficiency to support him; not  $\frac{1}{4}$  of (1) per C<sup>t</sup> on the Business. He has, if I have the Credit of fixing him there, done me honor; he has at the same time obtained y<sup>e</sup> good opinion and Friendship of the Capital persons at Nantes. I am thus particular on this subject as I am well Convinced it has been represented to you very differently. How it has been represented I know not, nor am I like to know; but from second hand, by your Brother showing the letter directed to me to M<sup>r</sup> Ross, & telling some others what were the Contents, and that you not only justified his Conduct, but had obtained for him more ample appointments with severe reprimands to me, & even oblique Censures on Doc<sup>t</sup> Franklin, who happens to be M<sup>r</sup> Williams's Uncle.

It is hard for me, acting as I have done from the most disinterested motives and from those principles of Friendship which shall be ever sacred with me, to be thus censured by you unheard, & that you should still so far confide in your Brother as to put the Censure in his hands, not to be shewn to me, but to others. I wrote the 5<sup>th</sup> of January, you will almost think with a presentiment of what was to happen. I said then that I would not be angry, and I assure you I am not, but I am exceedingly hurt, not on acc<sup>t</sup> of any prejudice your Brother's Conduct will in the End do me particularly, but on your acc<sup>t</sup> more immediately; for let me inform you of what it is probable others will not: it is reported that your Brother's excesses, tho' no way comparable to the present, were known to you several years before he left America.

The Friends of America in France, as well as the Americans themselves, are surprized to find him still Continued in the most important as well as most delicate Trust of being at the head, as it were, of American Commerce at this Critical Period, and at the same time are grieved to see the effect this confidence has on him. You may suppose this occasions much speculation, not among the Americans only, but among the Merch<sup>ts</sup> of Europe to whom the management of our affairs in the Commercial department is no secret. M<sup>r</sup> Ross does justice to the Character you gave of him. I expect to see him in Paris in a few days, when I shall shew him wh<sup>t</sup> I now write you. I have not the least desire of intermeddling in the Commercial Concerns of Congress in Europe, nor of going out of my own department, what ever it may be, on any occasion, but I have been obliged to take much on my hands in the procuring supplies of Clothing, &c., as have also my Colleagues, on acc<sup>t</sup> of the unhappy situation of affairs here as to Commerce. I will not add to a Letter already long, only that if I have been mistaken in any thing, you will reflect that I write in reply to a part of one of yours which I am unable to procure a sight of, & assure you that no private Concern effects me more y<sup>n</sup> [than] the having drawn on myself your Resentment by my desire of serving you ; and tho' Confident you will be soon disabused, yet I fear the part you have taken for y<sup>r</sup> Brother in this affair, tho' you have doubtless acted from the most natural as well as generous and good principles, may produce Consequences which none but your as well as my Enemies wish for. Be assured that I retain the highest Esteem & Respect for you in your public as well as private Character, and am

Your sincere Friend, &c.,

S. DEANE.

Hon<sup>l</sup> Rob<sup>t</sup> Morriss, Esq<sup>r</sup>

26<sup>th</sup> Sept<sup>r</sup>

P.S. I am still without being able to get a sight of your Lett<sup>r</sup>, tho' your Brother is still in Town & I have



repeatedly sent to him. Your Friends as well as mine are hurt to see a Letter wrote by a Person in your public & distinguished Situation to one (however unworthy) in a State equally conspicuous & important, treated in the manner this is ; conscious that I have done nothing to forfeit your Friendship, & in full Confidence that you must be convinced of it soon, if not already, I will continue to think of you, to write to you, & treat you as if nothing had happened, yet I think in justice to you as well as to myself, I ought to inform you of some things which, if they have your approbation, I frankly tell you I must hold you unworthy of my Friendship in future, & must leave it to the world to judge between us.

Your Brother had not been visible on the Change at Nantes, nor accessible to those who had business with him, for some time before he rec<sup>d</sup> your Lett<sup>rs</sup> ; on the rec<sup>t</sup> of them he came abroad, shewed them to every one he met with, & in a foolish kind of Triumph, hung them up in his Counting house for Two or Three Days together, that they might be seen & show your censure on the Commission, on me in particular, and your approbation of his Conduct. He then posts up to Paris, giving out that he had in his Pocket Lett<sup>rs</sup> for my immediate recall. You may easily conceive I felt infinitely less for myself on this occasion than for you & the public, when I tell you, as in Justice I ought, that this was done by him in such a situation & in such places that it could have no effect on me personally, nor have any other than to excite the astonishment of every thinking person at seeing such Powers and such Confidence placed in one who could be thus capable of abusing them. He shows also a Lett<sup>r</sup> from you to him, which surprises me still more ; in it I am told from persons on whom I can rely, that you inform him of wh<sup>t</sup> I had wrote to Congress, & call on him to resent it ; you also mention having seen also wh<sup>t</sup> M<sup>r</sup> Lee wrote, by which it appears that neither M<sup>r</sup> Lee nor myself have any

Credit with you on the subject. Why are your Complaints particularly against me? And why do you labor to excite the Resentments of your Brother personally against me? Review M<sup>r</sup> Lee's Lett<sup>r</sup>; it is before you. Is there any thing in mine half so severe? Read the enclosed extracts of a Letter from M<sup>r</sup> Paulze, one of the Principal Farmers General which was inclosed to the Congress some months since, (but possibly might not have come to hand when you wrote), & then judge if I or others have misrepresented things. But permit me to make one observation on what I learn to be the chief ground of your Complaint. That I wrote to Congress before I wrote to you on the subject. I have before shewn you to be under a mistake as to this, but suppose it otherways. I was the servant of the Congress, so was your Brother. No Friendship nor the most delicate Connection ought to superceed obligations of Fidelity to my honorable Employers. And let me ask of you in what light I must have been considered, had I been silent on the subject to them & whispered it to you in Confidence? My Confidence in you would carry me very far, yet I find by experience that had I acted in that manner, my Confidence would have been inexcusably culpable. In what situation must the Servants of the Public be hereafter, if when they candidly inform the Congress of the mismanagement of its Interest, & the publicly scandalous conduct of those intrusted by them, the Person complained of is not only informed of the Channel thro' wh<sup>ch</sup> the information was given, but called upon even by one of the Congress to resent? This is so much the reverse of every thing, either just, generous, or Politic, as well as so directly contrary to what I know were formerly the known & established rules & Laws of Congress, that I cannot bring myself to believe you capable of it, but rather am inclined to believe it a Forgery of this unhappy man to give himself (as he foolishly imagines) importance, tho' at your expence; and did you know



with whom he is making himself important, & in what Places, you would have some Idea how much I feel as well for you as for my Country. Whatever may be your Resentments at Present, you will, on coolly reviewing the part I have uniformly acted towards you, acknowledge it to have been an Open and a Generous one, And I am determined it shall be so in future. I consider Liberality of Sentiments & sincerity as the Especials of that Friendship I wish to cultivate, & when I must have an Enemy, it is some Consolation to have him an Open & a generous one. I cannot bring myself to Consider you as an Enemy, notwithstanding what has passed, and hope it is still in your Power to determine what part to take; if the latter, I presume you will be open & Generous.

I must pray you to Communicate this Lett<sup>r</sup> & the Copies inclosed to the Honor<sup>l</sup> Comm. for Foreign Affairs. I desire this, as my Letters as well as those of your Brother have been read in Congress, and the approbation of him is so far a Censure on me for my information, that Justice requires that I should at least have the opp<sup>y</sup> of representing the part I have acted, & the motives of my Conduct, in a fair & open Light, after which I shall most Chearfully submit to their Judgment on the whole.

27<sup>th</sup> Second Postscript.

I this moment rec<sup>d</sup> your Lett<sup>r</sup>, or rather it was D<sup>r</sup> Franklin who read it to me; as I propose observing upon it hereafter, will not trouble you in this farther than to say it had lost its original Cover, & was much soiled & damaged by frequent perusing, as before hinted.

Copies inclosed (viz.), Extract of a Letter from M<sup>r</sup> Paulze, have stated:

“You have had, Sir, the Complaisance to pre-inform your Brother of the well founded Complaints which I had made respecting the dishonest Conduct of M<sup>r</sup> Morriss; he wrote me last Monday, & mentioned

his having communicated them to M<sup>r</sup> Franklin. It seems M<sup>r</sup> Franklin was previously informed of the Low subterfuge employed by M<sup>r</sup> Morriss. I annex hereto a Copy of a Letter I wrote yesterday to your Brother; I shall not be sorry if he Communicates my Lett<sup>r</sup> to M<sup>r</sup> Franklin, and if it leads him to those precautions which he ought to take with persons who mix so much subtlety in Business. But I am not the less astonished that these Gentlemen Commiss<sup>rs</sup> should permit the Congress to be represented in one of the principal Ports of France by a man always drunk and abandoned to every thing debasing in Drunkenness & debauchery; such are the unanimous acc<sup>ts</sup> brought from Nantes, & the Conduct of that man produces the worst Effects; were it not for Mess<sup>rs</sup> Schweighauer and Gruel, to whom he is addressed, all the Commercial People would long since have been disgusted & have refused to do any Business with him. You, Sir, will make that use of this information which your own prudence will dictate."

Signed, Paulze.

Postscript of a Letter from Doc<sup>t</sup> Franklin & M<sup>r</sup> Deane.

March, 1777.

"Just as we were closing this Lett<sup>r</sup>, we rec<sup>d</sup> a Lett<sup>r</sup> from M<sup>r</sup> Lee, dated Bordeaux, 22<sup>d</sup> Feb<sup>y</sup>, 1777. He was to set out next day for Madrid. The following extract of his Lett<sup>r</sup> we think merits your attention, & that we ought to transmit it." In every merch<sup>ts</sup> mouth of any Character at Nantes & Bordeaux the names of M<sup>r</sup> Morris & Merkle are absolutely Contemptible; & I assure you this censure is not a little visited, especially in this last place, on them who appointed them. As far as my imperfect Judgment of Commerce can inform me, the Credit of the Congress seems to have suffered by their Conduct almost irreparably."

Signed, A. LEE.



Extract of a Letter from M<sup>r</sup> Jn<sup>o</sup> Ross to S. Deane,

dated Nantes, July 30<sup>th</sup>, 1777.

“ Nothing occurs since my last, nor have I seen our wretched Friend this Fortnight, he being without intermission abandoned to the most disgraceful pursuits of debauchery. It will be necessary to adopt what you recommend, and I have concluded to do it, but wait until I can catch him in his sober moments, that I may endeavor to obtain some Letters & acc<sup>ts</sup> in his possession. In his present humor, engaged, as I am informed he is with the lowest Reptiles of human Society, he declares vengeance against me for my interference, pretending I mean to injure his Character and supersede him in his Business. These are the Declarations of a drunken fool & madman & not worth mentioning. So soon as I shall be able to catch him in a reasonable state, I shall easily change his tone, if not lost to all reflection, which I now fear is the Case. You can't conceive the satisfaction I have in C<sup>r</sup> Greens being here to see the wretched behavior of this inconsiderate mortal, Tho<sup>s</sup> Morris. His conduct is scarcely credible, except to those on the spot.” I am, &c.,

Signed, JOHN ROSS.

Extract of a Letter from Jn<sup>o</sup> Ross to W<sup>m</sup> Carmichael.

Sept<sup>r</sup> 13<sup>th</sup>, 1777.

“ Before you receive this you will see Morriss. He has a Lett<sup>r</sup> to M<sup>r</sup> Deane from his Brother, open for his own delivery. M<sup>r</sup> Morriss of Phil<sup>a</sup> is very much offended that M<sup>r</sup> Deane did not give the first notice of his Brother's unhappy neglect of Business to him previous to his writing to Congress. And the Letters he had from Morriss by the same Conveyance, accompanying merchandize, led him to favor his Brother & impute the representation to Causes which I apprehend M<sup>r</sup> T. M<sup>s</sup> Letters insinuated, & I wish M<sup>r</sup> Deane had given R. Morriss the first intimation of his Brother's unhappy situation. I saw that part of the Letter to

M<sup>r</sup> Deane regarding T. M., & it is in a very warm stile, but I observed to M<sup>r</sup> T. M., if he expected himself secure in Consequence of it, he was to blame, as I conceived his Lett<sup>rs</sup> to his Brother had produced it in part, & that I knew he had deceived his Brother in his Representation of himself & others. Poor unfortunate & inconsiderate mortal! he is intirely lost, & be assured, too far gone to retrieve; and you may depend my Lett<sup>r</sup> to his Brother will have a diff<sup>t</sup> Effect when it reaches him. If M<sup>r</sup> T. M., in the Course of Life led by him, can survive it till he get back to Philadelphia, his Brother will have proof of the unconquerable habits to which he is addicted. His Business remains in y<sup>e</sup> unsettled state it has been in, in the hands of those who, in my opinion, will take advantage of his weakness so long as he is able to put Property into their hands."

Signed, JOHN ROSS.

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO MESSRS. PLAIRNE, PENET & CO.

Paris, 30<sup>th</sup> Sept., 1777.

GENTLEMEN,—Enclosed is a copy of mine of the 19<sup>th</sup> inst, of which I have already sent you a duplicate, without receiving any reply. This will be handed to you by M<sup>r</sup> Williams, and I once more ask you to resolve me as to the Question asked in it. I am, Gent., &c.,

S. DEANE.

Mes<sup>rs</sup> Plairne, Penet & C<sup>o</sup>

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO ROBERT MORRIS.

Paris, October 1<sup>st</sup>, 1777.

DEAR SIR,—After closing my Letter of the 23<sup>d</sup> & 26 ult<sup>o</sup>, which I presume you lay before the Congress, M<sup>r</sup> T. Morris on the 27<sup>th</sup> call'd on me and said he had a letter from you, which though directed to me re-



spected the Commissioners, & therefore he chose to deliver it in the Presence of Doct<sup>r</sup> Franklin. I there-upon conducted him to the Doctor's apartments, and he delivered the Letter to him; it was open, very much worn & dirty, & the cover in which it was wrapped, without being sealed, was superscribed in the hand writing of M<sup>r</sup> T. Morris. After Doctor Franklin had read the Letter, M<sup>r</sup> T. Morris told us we had written to Congress more than was true respecting his Conduct. That the Congress was of this opinion, & that he should hereafter despise us and treat us with the greatest Contempt, adding other insulting expressions not necessary to be repeated.

To all which my venerable Colleague made this [answer]: "It gives me pleasure to be respected by men who are themselves respectable, but I am indifferent to the sentiments of those who are of a contrary Character, and I only wish your future Conduct may be such as to entitle you to the approbation of your Honorable Constituents."

On parting, M<sup>r</sup> T. Morris told us he had shewn the Letter to all whom he thought his friends, &, having copied it, he should continue to shew it in the same manner hereafter. How publick it may soon be made by him, or those he communicates it to, I know not; but I am apprehensive that many who are neither Friends to him nor America have already seen it, and that this indiscreet exposure of it gives our Enemies an opportunity of using it to strengthen their Accounts of our internal divisions, animosities, &c. I must also inform you that M<sup>r</sup> Penet, pretending to have rec<sup>d</sup> intelligence from you of what I wrote to Congress concerning him, has had the assurance to send me open, by M<sup>r</sup> T. Morris, an insulting & menacing Letter, which had also been shown in the same manner. But such proceedings from these men are not surprising after you had not only informed them of what we had written to Congress, but have, as I understand, excited them to resent it; though as far as respects

your Brother, you yourself declare that you believe "he deserves every Title of it." The Extracts which I inclosed in my last will evince that the good or ill opinion of such men cannot affect us as Individuals, tho' I must Confess that it appears derogatory to our Publick Character, as well as of Dangerous Example that we should be exposed to such treatment for having as the Servants of the Publick done an Act of indispensable duty to our Constituents. Your principal cause of complaint against me, as stated in your Letter, is that we did not suppress all information respecting your Brother, & convey it only to you in private; because your Letter by Cap<sup>t</sup> Bell ought to have convinced us that it was not necessary, & "that you did not wish him employ'd in the Publick Service if he did not deserve it."

You should, however, have neglected (& I remark this once for all) that the Letters by Cap<sup>t</sup> Bell, on which you frequently lay so much stress, did not and could not possibly come to hand untill long after we had written that to Congress which you complain of, And your Brothers misconduct had then become so flagrant & notorious that we did not imagine that our silence wou'd have preserved to him a good name, though it must have appear'd like a culpable sacrifice of Publick Duty to private friendship, and a sacrifice, too, had we been dispos'd to make it, did not appear likely to do you any service; nor wou'd this have been otherwise had it not been for the present very limited communication from Europe to America. You say, too, that in your Letter by Cap<sup>t</sup> Bell, you had put "your Brother in my Power, either to be confirmed in his employment or dismissed, as his Conduct might require." The Letter in Question was written by you in your private capacity, and it did not appear to me that any individual Member of Congress could authorize me to displace a Man regularly vested by Congress with Powers independent of those given to the Commissioners. Of this your Brother has appear'd both then &



since to be perfectly sensible, & he has long set us at defiance. It seems, therefore, wrong in you "to get up in Congress" & declare that you had put your Brother in my Power, &c., unless Congress had given you special authority over that department, which indeed appears likely to have been the case from your declaring, "that if your Brother's Conduct had been such as to inspire you with perfect confidence, all the Commissioners in Paris should not remove him." However, as you did not inform me of your having such special authority, all that I could do, in consequence of your Letter, was privately to admonish your Brother & endeavour by my friendly exertions, if possible, to reclaim him, and that I was desirous of doing this you might easily have discover'd by my friendly Letters of last March & April.

Respecting the information that certain Gentlemen at Nantes have lately given you; I shall only observe, That interested as certain Persons there are to have M<sup>r</sup> T. Morris continued in his appointment, it is not surprising that they should represent things in his favour. Time, however, will discover who has really done the business which passes under his name, and in what manner it has been done. The other scandalous insinuations are as contemptible as they are wicked. I never had any Nephew, Cousin, or Partner to provide for, & our motives respecting M<sup>r</sup> Williams have been truly stated in my Letter of the 23<sup>d</sup> ultimo. You will before this have heard that the Commissioners committed to him the Care of forwarding their Dispatches. We had good reason for this Precaution, arising from the manner in which Letters to & from America were understood to have been treated by certain Persons at Nantes; & we were at that Time more particularly induced to it by Cap<sup>t</sup> Hammond, having just been detained near a fortnight there, after he had rec<sup>d</sup> from us dispatches of great importance, whereby he lost the advantage of a most favorable Wind, & we much fear that he has been himself lost

in Consequence of it, having heard nothing of his Arrival.

You will also, I suppose, have heard that the Commissioners authorized M<sup>r</sup> Williams to sell the Prizes lately made by Cap<sup>ts</sup> Wickes, Johnson & Nicholson; for this, too, we had sufficient reasons. We knew that in M<sup>r</sup> T. Morriss [fits] of Intemperance and debauchery he was unfit for all business & shut up from all access; that these Paroxysms usually lasted for several weeks together & without a single Hour's remission, & that there was very short intervals between the Termination of one Paroxysm & the Commencement of another, and the business committed to him not being done by himself or by any in whom we could confide, but by Persons who had just before very badly disposed of Prizes consigned to M<sup>r</sup> Morris, we thought the steps that we took a necessary act of Duty. M<sup>r</sup> T. Morris, however, denied both our general authority & that of your Letter by Cap<sup>t</sup> Bell, & has disposed of the Prizes & left us to pay for the Repairs & other expences of the Reprizal, Lexington & Dolphin, amounting to more than seventy thousand Livres.

M<sup>r</sup> T. Morris was directed by Congress to pay us £10,000 Sterling, but so early as in January last he boasted that we were in his Power, and when we had rec<sup>d</sup> about 60,000 livres (less than £3,000), Gruel & Pannet, who manage affairs as they please, order'd their Banker at Paris to stop Paying us any more and to protest our Bills, wickedly hoping by that management to get us into their Power. Such Treatment (& I represent it in the softest light) must, I think, shock the Congress as much as you were shocked by the representations we made to Congress.

M<sup>r</sup> Lee undertook two expensive Journeys, one to Spain and the other to Prussia, and our Publick Characters required our living expensively here. This, with the Sums we have Paid for Expresses sent to & dispatched by us, and those we have advanced to relieve distressed Americans confined in England or escaping



from thence, soon exhausted our scanty supply, and we have not at present the smallest prospect of receiving any more of the £10,000 order'd to us.

This, however, is a subject more proper for our joint representation than for my Answer to a Letter addressed individually to me.

I am informed that M<sup>r</sup> T. Morris shows about a very long Letter from you to him, mentioning, among other things, that our Letters respecting him had been read in Congress, & not only disbelieved but treated with indignity. What extraordinary Causes have been employed to produce such extraordinary effects I know not; but as it seems that the Congress have been so far misled as to doubt whether the Commissioners have not, from interested views, unjustly accused Mr. T. Morris, it becomes necessary that they should be made acquainted with what I have written to you on this subject, and I must, therefore, request that you will communicate to Congress as well the present Letter as my last, with the several Extracts, Documents, &c., inclosed therewith.

I have the Honour to remain with much esteem, &c.,

SILAS DEANE.

Hon. Robert Morris, Esq.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO ROBERT MORRIS.

Paris, October 1<sup>st</sup>, 1777.

DEAR SIR,—In my Letter of the 23<sup>d</sup> & 26<sup>th</sup> & of the 30<sup>th</sup>, I have reply'd to the Political contents of yours of the 29th of June ultimo. I now come to commercial. I am sorry that M<sup>r</sup> Bromfield has been guilty of any indiscretions, but hope they are not capital ones. I know him to be an honest, tho' perhaps not one of the most cautious Persons in the World. The adventure by him & Cap<sup>t</sup> Roach was agreed upon immediately after the Receipt of yours

in June, 1776, and I wrote your Brother to come over from London to assist in the Execution, and take the direction of it. I mentioned him to M<sup>r</sup> Chaumont in the most favourable manner. I had orally the fullest confidence at that Time that he would have come over, and that he would have managed the affair to mutual satisfaction; in expectation of this we delay'd as long as was consistent with sending out in any season, when I made out the Invoice and gave orders for purchasing the Goods, which I believe was done to good advantage.

Just before M<sup>r</sup> Bromfield was setting out, your Brother arrived. I communicated the affair to him, and introduced him to M<sup>r</sup> Chaumont, tho' apparently against his desire. Having many affairs of the Publick then on my hands, I prayed him to confer with M<sup>r</sup> Chaumont and assist him in the Dispatches, & sign the agreement for the payment on your account; he promised he would, but M<sup>r</sup> Chaumont after calling several Times at his lodgings without being permitted to see him, and waiting several days, became exceedingly disgusted, and the more so as he became acquainted with the course he was pursuing. On this he urged me to take the share designed for us Jointly, on my own account; I refused, and signed for you for the payment of the first Cost of the Goods agreeable to your Letter. But as the Delaware was then blocked up, The voyage was ordered to the Southward, conditionally with the liberty of going to Philadelphia if practicable. M<sup>r</sup> Chaumont, having engaged a man in whom he had confidence to go in the vessel, insisted on consigning the Cargo to him & M<sup>r</sup> Bromfield; as he observed there was no probability of the business being done in Philadelphia, or under your Eye, he must prefer his own Factor to yours. This, Sir, is the simple state of the affair.

I have discharged ten Thousand livres of the Debt, and hope the returns will come in Season for the Balance, otherways I know not what I shall do, as I



stand engaged to him for the remainder. M<sup>r</sup> Chaumont had, and, I assure you, still has, the fullest confidence in you and your House, to whose address he shipp'd about the same time a Quantity of Powder via Martinico, and were the Navigation open to Philadelphia wou'd adventure largely to your address. He is a capital Man in the commerce of this Kingdom, well respected by the Ministry, and a warm friend to America. I was early acquainted with him, and have ever found him a Person of strict Honor. Mess<sup>rs</sup> Delap equipp'd a Brig on our Joint Acc<sup>t</sup>, which was taken; the Acc<sup>ts</sup> I will lay before M<sup>r</sup> Ross, and desire him to send you Duplicates from Nantes by different vessels. If no accident happen to Capt. Roach's returns, you will save money on the close of these Adventures; for any thing future I really have no Time. My Brother [Simeon Deane], who is here for a few weeks, proposes going out & fixing in Virginia the coming Winter. As he is well acquainted with Business, sober and industrious, I recommend him to your correspondence, and I doubt not you will find it satisfactory and of mutual benefit. M<sup>r</sup> Ross came here two or three Days since; to him I shall unreservedly communicate whatever relates to our commercial concerns, and desire him to give you his sentiments of the mode in which they have been conducted, for I find him to answer the Character you gave of him to me, in your former Letters, as a Merchant, within which Line he acts; and were all the Factors and Mercantile Agents from America of his Character, the commerce of America would have better Credit than it has, and, I presume, no foundation of Complaint from any Quarter.

My most respectful compliments to M<sup>rs</sup> Morris, & be assured I am, with the greatest respect,

Dear Sir, &c.,

SILAS DEANE.

Hon. Robert Morris, Esq<sup>r</sup>

*Thomas Mss.*

TO CHARLES W. F. DUMAS.

Paris, October 1<sup>st</sup>, 1777.

DEAR SIR,—I feel myself sensibly affected on receiving your kind and friendly condolence on my Misfortunes,\* & have the most grateful sense of the part you take in what affects me so nearly; though the situation of my Country is sufficient to engross my whole attention, yet the loss I have met with is not the less heavy on my spirits, nor does it fall the lighter on me for coming attended with publick misfortunes & distress. But I will not trust myself on the subject least I show too much Distress & Grief on any thing which effects me individually. May you long be a stranger to such a tryal, and when the parting scene arrives, may it be as gentle and soft as the Course of Nature can admit of. I shall write to you in a few days by a Friend going to Holland, and refer every thing I have to say on American Affairs till then. I shall do myself the Honor of writing to your Lady and acknowledging the obligations she has laid me under by her Letter. As I must write in English, you must interpret, & in the meantime oblige me by presenting her my most respectful Compliments.

And be assured I am ever, with the utmost Esteem,

Dear Sir, &c.,

SILAS DEANE.

Mons<sup>r</sup> Dumas.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO MESSRS. PLAIRNE AND PENET.

Paris, Oct<sup>r</sup> 2<sup>d</sup>, 1777.

GENTLEMEN,—Your letter of the 27<sup>th</sup> ult<sup>o</sup> is before me, in which you are pleased to say: "Now as we well know & ought to know that you rec<sup>d</sup> said sum of money, which M<sup>r</sup> T. Morris ordered you to be paid at

\* New London, June 27. Died at Wethersfield, after a long Indisposition, Mrs. Elizabeth Deane, Consort of Silas Deane, Esq., now in France, and Daughter of Gen. Gurdon Saltonstall of this Town.—*Connecticut Gazette*, June 27, 1777.



Paris for the purposes aforesaid, it surprizes us much," &c. This, Gentlemen, is a very great mistake in you, for I have not rec<sup>d</sup> that money, & I leave the Question to rest on that single point. If you or M<sup>r</sup> Morris will make it appear that I have rec<sup>d</sup> the avails of the Tobacco for the purposes for which it was ordered, I will be much obliged to you & remain contented. It is true that I drew three Bills on Soulier, two of which he paid & the third he refused. The two w<sup>h</sup> he paid he absolutely refused to pass to the acc<sup>t</sup> of M<sup>r</sup> T. Morris, though he had before promised to do it, & passed the same to the acc<sup>t</sup> of the Monies which M<sup>r</sup> Gruel had Lodged in his hands long before for the use of Mess<sup>rs</sup> Franklin, Deane & Lee, & which M<sup>r</sup> Morris had no kind of Interest or Concern in, nor the house of Mess<sup>rs</sup> Willing, Morris & C<sup>o</sup>. By this Conduct of Soulier, in which he is justified by Morris, I have never touched one Livre of the money of the Tobacco or Furs, the latter of which you were, as you acknowledge, ordered to send to me & to no other person. There can be no dispute about the Furrs, & I must ask you to pay the amount of the net Proceeds to M<sup>r</sup> Williams on the receipt of this Letter, & his receipt shall be good for me. As to the Tobacco, there need be no misunderstanding; the case is very simple: you have rec<sup>d</sup> the avails with orders, to account for the same to me. You say you suppose M<sup>r</sup> T. Morris had accounted with and paid me. I have told you how that matter is, & that I have not rec<sup>d</sup> it otherwise than as before mentioned. Now, if M<sup>r</sup> Soulier had charged the money I rec<sup>d</sup> of him, or if he will still charge it to M<sup>r</sup> T. Morris's acc<sup>t</sup>, as he promised, the whole is settled at once, & I do not desire to have any thing to do with it further than I am obliged to; but Mess<sup>rs</sup> Willing, Morris & C<sup>o</sup> ought to know where they are to look back for their money, & as they expressly ordered it to me, they will call on me to account for it. As I am at a distance, I will be contented with your accounting to M<sup>r</sup> Ross, who I have desired to settle

this affair, as in justice it ought to be settled. Mess<sup>rs</sup> Willing, Morris & C<sup>o</sup> have the fullest confidence in him, & I have the same. In the mean time I am, Gentlemen, your most Humble servant,

S. DEANE.

Mess<sup>rs</sup> Pliarne, Penet & C<sup>o</sup>

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO BARNABAS DEANE.

Paris, Oct<sup>o</sup> 3<sup>d</sup>, 1777.

DEAR BROTHER,—The melancholy event in my Family makes me more than ever desirous of having my son sent to Europe for the Benefit of his Education. I have wrote you several Letters on the subject which may have failed, & I now repeat my desire that he may be inoculated, if not already done; and as the danger of the Enemy is so great, as well as the extreme inconveniencies attending a voyage in one of our armed vessels, I wish you could so negotiate the matter as to procure a passage for him to England in one of the Enemies ships; from England I can send for him at any time I please, & I am confident the Enemy would not be so mean & revengeful as to detain him prisoner. I would by no means have you take a step in this affair without the Consent & Approbation of General Washington, or whoever may be the Commander in chief. My sole Object is to fix him in an Academy where he may have a regular Education, & an opportunity of acquiring the French Language early in Life; & if you could by the Interest of some of our former acquaintance, now in the opposite party, procure him a passage in one of their ships to England, he undoubtedly might come safer & more Comfortable. I would sooner perish than ask any favor of the Enemy for any thing that represented myself solely, but to give youth the best advantage for acquiring useful knowlege, & of becoming useful in the world is a benefit to the World in general, &



[I cannot] conceive of its being objected to by any; however, you on the spot will consult the Temper of the Times, & not attempt to send him without the approbation of the Comm<sup>dr</sup> in chief, or of the Congress; his Education will not be so expensive here as in America, & may be attended with many advantages; if any Gentleman of your acquaintance would send a son with him, I will charge myself with fixing him in an Academy here, in the manner he shall choose, & he might accompany my son. Brother Simeon is here, & will probably set out on his return before Winter; but I hear nothing of J. Sebor, who, he tells me, was to have come out after him soon. I cannot at this distance give any particular directions respecting my private affairs in general. I conclude you will dispose of them for the best.

I am, &c.,  
SILAS DEANE.

B<sup>s</sup> Deane, Esq<sup>r</sup>

*Thomas Mss.*

TO JONATHAN WILLIAMS.

Paris, October 3<sup>d</sup>, 1777.

DEAR SIR,—I now send you inclosed the other Letter for R. M. Esq<sup>r</sup>, and one for my Brother. I sent by the Waggon with the Cloaths of Codere, Two Boxes, marked, I think, S. D. I order'd them so; please to add to the marks, B. D., and ship them by different vessels, directed to Barnabas Deane, Esq<sup>r</sup>, Wethersfield, Connecticut. You need be in no hurry about sending them, but keep it in mind that they are to be sent, if Opportunity offer, to some Port in New England, and must be carefully handled; or send them to Virginia, to the care of Mess<sup>rs</sup> Norton & Beall, Williamsburg, to be kept untill my Brother send for them, desiring Mess<sup>rs</sup> Norton & Beall, or whoever you may send them to, to forward the Letter accompanying to my Brother, of which I send you Duplicates

marked N<sup>o</sup> 1 & 2. I hope this will find you safe arrived, with your Brother in health.

I am, with much Esteem, &c.,

SILAS DEANE.

Jon<sup>a</sup> Williams, Esq.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO BARNABAS DEANE.

Paris, October 3<sup>d</sup>, 1777.

DEAR BROTHER,—This informs you that I have sent (via Nantes) two Boxes containing one of my Busts in each of them; you will keep one & present the other to our Sister. They are not so good a likeness as I could wish to send Persons in whose Memory I wish to preserve the first Place, But they are much nearer to my present appearance than to what I was when I last had the Pleasure of seeing you; give my most affectionate Love to Sister. My Compliments and best respects to all our Friends, and believe me ever your most affectionate Brother,

SILAS DEANE.

P. S.—I will send one to M<sup>r</sup> Webb soon, tho' I have not rec'd a Line from him since I left America.

To B. Deane, Esq<sup>r</sup>

*Thomas Mss.*

TO THE NAVAL COMMITTEE.

Paris, Oct<sup>o</sup> 4<sup>th</sup>, 1777.

GENTLEMEN,—The Bearer, Mons<sup>r</sup> Jarne, is recommended to me by Gentlemen of reputation as a brave & Experienced seaman, & who served in the last War; he wants to find employ in the American Navy, & for that purpose makes this voyage. Cap<sup>t</sup> Bell has been well acquainted with him, & also with his Friends at S<sup>t</sup> Maloe's, & gives him a good Character; I have therefore taken the Liberty to recommend him to your Board for such employ as you shall find him



capable of in your Navy, in which I presume, from the Character given of him, he may be of service. I have the honor to remain, &c.,

SILAS DEANE.

Committee of Navy.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO JONATHAN WILLIAMS.

Paris, Oct<sup>o</sup> 4<sup>th</sup>, 1777.

DEAR SIR,—In my Letter of yesterday, I mentioned inclosing to you the letters for my Brother Bar<sup>s</sup> Deane no. 1 & 2 to be sent with the Boxes. I afterwards found the inclosed on my Desk, which made me apprehend y<sup>t</sup> I had possibly made some mistake in the hurry I was in, either by not forwarding with the Letters mentioned, or by sending forward one to you designed for another Conveyance; to prevent any mistake this might occasion, I send you this open, & ask you to open both the others and compare them; if they are the same you will destroy this & send on the two that compare, & hold the other in your hands, noticing to me in your next how you find them. The post is not come in from England, Consequently have no news.

I am, &c.,

SILAS DEANE.

Jon<sup>o</sup> Williams, Esq<sup>r</sup>

*Thomas Mss.*

TO ——— SELLOREF.

Paris, Octo. 5, 1777.

SIR,—I received yours of the 4<sup>th</sup>, & am much surprised to find that my Letter of 19<sup>th</sup> Sept. never came to your hands. I send you a Copy of what I then wrote you, & in that Letter inclosed the Letter you ask for. I am really surprised to find it never came to your hand, as I sent it by the Petit Post. I know

not what method to take to recover it, & I now send my servant with this to prevent its failing.

I have the honor to be, with much respect, &c., &c.,  
SILAS DEANE.

Mon<sup>s</sup> Selloref.

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TO JOHN LLOYD.

Passy, Oct<sup>o</sup> 5<sup>th</sup>, 1777.

DEAR SIR,—Yours of yesterday is before me, & I should have done myself the honor of waiting on you, but am engaged in preparing dispatches for America. M<sup>r</sup> Beaumarchais was obliged to take a small Journey before he determined on any thing ; I tho't there was a probability of succeeding with him, but as he will return to town on Tuesday this week, will obtain a final answer the first time I see him after his return. As to Mons. De Parney & his partners at S<sup>t</sup> Maloes, I am always ready to give them, & every other Merchant adventuring to America, all the assistance in my power, but their Conduct has been a little extraordinary, & their request unreasonable ; they ask me to give Letters of Recommendation for men I never saw, & to address them not only to Merchants in America, but to the Congress. As I have found by Costly experience what use these kind of Adventurers make of Letters when they get into America, I must be more Cautious, or I shall involve myself as well as Friends in Difficulties. The Line I marked out to them several Months since is a very simple one : that they address their Cargoes & their Factors to some known & Capital House, which House will do their Business on the usual Commission, & introduce their Friends to an acquaintance with the Gentlemen in Trade, which is all that in my opinion is necessary ; but they are desirous of being introduced to Congress & to all the Merchants in America, & have asked of me Letters to every Town on the Continent, which, if there was no other Difficulty, is a Task which I have



neither time nor Inclination to undertake, but am ready to serve them the other way, which is the only reasonable one in my opinion. My Compliments to your Lady; if you have Letters for America, I can forward them for you tomorrow Evening.

I am, &c.,

SILAS DEANE.

Mr Lloyd.\*

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO BENJAMIN HARRISON.

Paris, Oct. 5<sup>th</sup>, 1777.

DEAR SIR,—Your obliging favor of the 27<sup>th</sup> of June came to hand. I most sincerely thank you for it. I have mention'd you to several Persons adventuring to

\* EXTRACTS OF LETTERS FROM JOHN LLOYD TO RALPH IZARD.

Nantes, August 11<sup>th</sup>, 1777.

"Having occasion to correspond with Mr. Deane upon some consequential business, and as I am a stranger to him I took the liberty to refer him to you for some information respecting me."

Ancenes, Nov. 12<sup>th</sup>, 1777.

"I have no doubt from what I discovered during my residence at Rouen and Havre, that Mr. Deane has private as well as publick pursuits, and I am more than ever convinced that he is a very improper person to be applied to for advice or assistance relative to a Loan wherein he is not materially interested. I am confident your idea of the man is just in every particular, but our opinions of and concerning him, as also others, it will be most prudent to reserve solely to ourselves, for reasons which are sufficiently manifest."

Nantes, Nov. 20<sup>th</sup>, 1777.

"I should have no objection to be landed as near Philadelphia as possible, as I wish to pay my respects to some members of Congress; besides, I am disposed to think that a personal acquaintance with that illustrious body, through the introduction of your good self and the Messrs. Lee, may be attended with a satisfactory and personal benefit, more especially as you and they have thought me deserving of an honourable and beneficial appointment.

"I am told that the brothers of the gentlemen whom I have just mentioned are leading Members of Congress, and that they have in consequence great influence. If that is the case, I think Deane stands on very uncertain ground, as you may depend upon it his conduct will not be represented in the most favourable point of view to them, which joined to M[orris]'s inveteracy, will form a collective power that may throw him from his present exalted pinnacle to the dreadful abyss of native insignificance. From the intimations of a friend of Deane's, I have some cause to believe that such an event would not be very unexpected."

*Correspondence of Ralph Izard, pages 322, 379, 384.*

Virginia, as one who was both capable and willing to render them Services ; but knowing that you was engaged at Congress, & not certain how far you were at present concerned in Commerce, or under whose Direction your affairs were in your absence, I have not been so particular as I shall be hereafter. The Goods wanted in America, in Virginia in Particular, are to be had in France, but I must inform you they are not so Cheap as we used to have them from England by 10 or 15 pr C<sup>t</sup> in general, Silks and Articles at present superfluous, as to us, excepted. Coarse Woolens are to be had on the best Terms from Germany, as are most other useful manufactures. You will, in course, see my Letters to M<sup>r</sup> Morriss, in which I have treated the subject with all the Tenderness I was capable of using. I show my Letters to Doct<sup>r</sup> Franklin, & had the Pleasure of receiving his approbation of them. I declare to you, that I still retain the warmest Friendship for M<sup>r</sup> R. Morriss, & Confident that he has been misled. I do not bear the least resentment ; on the contrary, I am grieved whenever I reflect on his wretched Brother's conduct here, & the success he has had in imposing on him as well as others in America. You will easily conceive how much our Commercial Credit has suffer'd in France by such kind of Agents, & in how disagreeable a situation the Commissioners must be to depend on such persons for the Money for their Support while doing the Publick Business. Indeed, had we not found other resources, We must long since have been destitute ; and as it is, we feel more than can be well express'd, but I will dismiss the subject.

I have been, & still am so engaged in procuring Cloathing & other Supplies for the Public, the laborious part of which has lain upon me, that I have no time to attend to any private Concern, tho' my extensive acquaintance in the Manufactories & with the Commercial People in Europe gives me every advantage I could wish or desire ; fortunately my Brother arrived



a few days since, and as he proposes returning this Season to America, I shall write you by him, & give him many things to inform you of, as well political as Commercial, which cannot be so well trusted to writing. Our last Intelligence is that Burgoyne was at Fort Edward, but nothing from Howe. We are extremely anxious for the next arrivals. France & Spain continue to Arm, yet I cannot say that a diversion on their part appears either so near or so certain as I could wish, but I refer you to our joint letters on this Subject. The depreciation of the Continental Paper appears rapid & alarming; possibly accounts of it are exaggerated; but is there no way to prevent it? If the Bills & Loan office notes were fixed by a certain Standard, to be paid or redeemed in real Coin, it would inspire some Confidence (even on this side of the Water) in them. But our Enemies revive & improve the History of Old Tenor, & make use of every advantage against the Credit of the Continental Currency.

I am in hopes that a Fifty Gun Ship, purchased by a Friend of mine, will sail in the Course of November for Virginia; by her I shall write you more particularly on many subjects; meantime I am, with the utmost esteem,

Dear Sir, your most Obedient & Very hum<sup>le</sup> Servant,

SILAS DEANE.

Hon. Benj. Harrison, Esq<sup>r</sup>

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO JOHN JAY.

Paris, October 6<sup>th</sup>, 1777.

MY DEAR SIR,—I am sorry to find by your Letter by Cap<sup>t</sup> Young, the only Letter I have received from you since I left America, that you are not in Congress. I doubt not you are wanted in other Departments, but can no where be of greater service to your Country than in that Body at this critical period. You will undoubtedly be acquainted with the substance of what

we write jointly ; will not therefore venture on particulars as to the politicks here. Europe appears interested in our Success, and France & Spain continue to Arm, yet the dread of a Continual war which they know not how far it may extend when once kindled, with many Circumstances arising from the state of Finances, Alliances, &c., has hitherto prevented our obtaining any thing decisive. There is not a State in Europe, Holland & one or two at most excepted, but what are involved in Debt, & it seems as if it had been the Study of the Ministry of every Court to increase their Debts & Expences rather than to lessen them. The Question is not how large a Capital they can discharge, but how much Interest they can possibly discharge Annually & calculate their Publick Expences & Exactions on the Subjects accordingly. The Publick Lenders as well as borrowers of money have lost sight of the principal, & attend only to the certain pay of the Interest. On this it is that Great Britain supports the present War ; a punctual payment of Interest gives Credit for more Loans, tho' no one believes the Kingdom able to answer the Capital, should it be demanded.

I have wrote you many Letters, most of which I fear have miscarried. I shall, however, continue to write by every direct opportunity. Your Brother is now at *Spa*, in Germany, from whence he wrote me a few Weeks since. You must be careful how you put too much Confidence in N<sup>o</sup> 1 & N<sup>o</sup> 2, as there are many ways, I find, of Discovery. I will write you again soon ; meantime am, &c.,

SILAS DEANE.

John Jay, Esq<sup>r</sup>

*Thomas Mss.*

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SIMEON DEANE TO CAPT. JOSEPH HYNSON.

Passy, 7<sup>th</sup> Oct<sup>r</sup>, 1777.

DEAR SIR,—I'm this minute informed that it is expected that You or Capt. Folger are to take charge of



the special packet from the Commissioners. A Packet is also directed to Barnabas Deane, Esq<sup>t</sup>, which I desire You would on your arrival in America send him by express, from the nearest place You are at in your journey to Philadelphia. The expense of the express he will pay on receipt of the packet, & generously satisfy any charge arising on it. I beg You will by no means fail of this particular, as 'tis of consequence.

Inclosed You have a letter to Mr. Limozin, which pray deliver immediately. 'Tis an order for some trifles to go by you, leave for which the commissioners have given. Shall be glad of a letter from You before You embark; at present have only time to say, God send You a good voyage, & remain

Your sincere friend,

SIMEON DEANE.

P. S. Any services I can be of to You here or elsewhere, pray command my gratitude at all times.

N. B. It may be well not to tell Mr. Limozin or any one else what vessel, or that a packet is going to America at all, nor that You are going out there—the reasons You know well.

To Cap<sup>t</sup> Joseph Hynson, or to Cap<sup>t</sup> Folger, by express, at Havre De Grace.

*Lee Papers, Harvard University.*

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TO CAPT. JOHN FOLGER.

Paris, Oct<sup>o</sup> 7<sup>th</sup>, 1777.

CAP<sup>t</sup> FOLGER,

SIR,—The disappointment in the Pacifique has, I learn, still detained you at Havre. The Commissioners are sending a swift sailing vessel with Letters for Congress, which they desire you to take the Charge of, & deliver with your own hand. If you undertake the trust, you will on receiving the Packet secure it & fix to it a proper weight for sinking it in case of being taken. You are by no means to suffer the Packet to

go out of your Possession, & for fear of accident to you, give Orders to the Cap<sup>t</sup> of the vessel to sink the Packet in Case of falling into the Enemies hands. You will endeavour to Pilot the Vessel in to some safe Harbour, & avoid speaking with any Vessel on your Passage; on your arrival you will go in Person express with the Packet to Congress, to whom we recommend you to be handsomely rewarded. Your expences in getting away from Havre you must send us the account of, using all the Oeconomy in furnishing yourself for the Voyage in your Power, & we will discharge it. As this is a swift Sailing Vessel, you will have a good Opportunity of returning to your Friends, and of rendering an important Service to your Country, In both of which We most heartily wish you success, and are, Sir, your most Obedient

& very humble Serv<sup>ts</sup>,

B. FRANKLIN.

SILAS DEANE.

P. S.—I say, if you undertake the trust, as I know not what your engagements may be; but if they should be such that you cannot, I have written to Cap<sup>t</sup> Hynson, praying him to do it, & in that case you will give him this Letter; it is desired you do not mention any thing of the voyage, or of the Packet going, to any one, on any acc<sup>t</sup>

*Thomas Mss.*

TO CAPT. JOSEPH HYNSON.

Paris, Oct<sup>o</sup> 7<sup>th</sup>, 1777.

SIR,—The Commissioners are sending a Packet to America by this conveyance. Cap<sup>t</sup> Folger has been wrote to take the Charge of it, if not otherways engaged, but as it is of importance that this Packet goes by safe hands, I have desired him, if he cannot go, to give you the Letter directed to him, & must depend on your executing this Commission.

The reason of applying first to Cap<sup>t</sup> Folger on this



subject is, that M<sup>r</sup> Williams has a vessel under his care, fitting for America, which I had determined for you. She is a Merchantman & bound for Virginia or Maryland, and if Capt. Folger goes in the Packet, as I expect, [I] desire you to take your Passage for Nantes, where M<sup>r</sup> Williams will give you the command of that Vessel. But as the publick are much interested in the safe delivery of these Dispatches, I hope you will go with them, if Cap<sup>t</sup> Folger cannot; you will write me by return of this express how you regulate this matter, but let me intreat you that there be no delay of this Packet on any account whatever. I am vexed at the many & repeated disappointments we have met with, which, however, I am confident you will not impute to me.

I am, in haste, y<sup>r</sup>, &c.

SILAS DEANE.

Capt. Hynson.

P. S.—You are desired not to mention any thing of your voyage, or of the Packet going, on any account whatever.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO BARNABAS DEANE.

Paris, 7<sup>th</sup> Oct<sup>o</sup>, 1777.

MY DEAR BROTHER,—You are well acquainted with my sensibility, & therefore must have some Idea of what I feel on the late affecting loss I have met with, which was announced to me first in the Publick Papers. I will make no reflections on the subject; at best they serve principally to amuse the mind & lull it into a soft insensibility of its sufferings. In my situation Publick distresses & calamities take the Place of every thing that is private. I have wrote more than Twenty letters to you since my leaving America, and doubt not you have been mindful of me, but I find few Letters pass to or from America in safety, out of the many which are written. Brother Simeon is now

with me, & writes by this Conveyance. I have repeatedly wrote to have my little son sent to me, & am now more than ever solicitous, if it can be done with any tolerable safety. I desire he may be previously inoculated, & if without giving offence, that he might by your interest with some of our former acquaintances obtain a Passage in an English Man of War to England, whence I can without difficulty get him over here. Tho' I am as obnoxious to England as any one Person living, yet they wou'd not detain a Lad who had taken no part, & whose view is to obtain the advantages of Education; but I would not have you do any thing which may be disagreeable to the regulations of Congress, or that you judge too hazardous for his Person. I shall have frequent opportunities of writing again soon & shall improve them; at present I'm too much hurried in getting away dispatches to Congress to add more than to desire my Complim<sup>ts</sup> to all Friends, & that I am, &c.

SILAS DEANE.

To B. Deane, Esq<sup>r</sup>

*Thomas Mss.*

TO MESSRS. CLIFFORD AND TEYSETT.

Paris, Oct<sup>r</sup> 8<sup>th</sup>, 1777.

GENT<sup>l</sup>,—I take liberty to refer you to my Brother, the bearer of this, for any thing you may desire to be informed of respecting our affairs in America, he comes to satisfy his curiosity & to form some acquaintance in your City, any Civilities in your way to shew him will lay me under Particular Obligations. I have desired him, if convenient to you, to settle the acc<sup>t</sup> which is open between us; if [in] any thing I can be of service to your House, I shall receive your Commands with Pleasure. I have the honor to be, &c.,

SILAS DEANE.

Mess<sup>rs</sup> Clifford & Teysett.

*Thomas Mss.*



TO SIR GEORGE GRAND.

Paris, Oct. 9<sup>th</sup>, 1777.

DEAR SIR,—This comes by my Brother, whom I take the liberty of recommending to your acquaintance; he has orders to examine into & settle the affairs of Merkle, as in justice it ought. I am sorry for the trouble you have had in it. If the Arms are not suitable for our Purpose, or laid in at too high a Price, we cannot have any thing to do with them. We were never under any engagement to M<sup>r</sup> Merkle, either directly or indirectly, but finding him under Difficulties in Consequence of a Contract which he had made in America, to compleat which the remittances failed, We proposed simply to receive the Arms, & actually engaged in case they were well bought & proper for our use. By your letters subsequent we had no reason to think they were of the Quality we wished for, yet in consequence of our hesitating he has proceeded to write us in the most menacing stile, as if we were indebted to him personally. M<sup>r</sup> Simeon Deane will consult with you & take your advice for finishing this affair in some shape or other; with respect to news from America, have none but what my Brother can inform you of in person much better than I can by writing. I have the honour to remain, &c.,

SILAS DEANE.

To Sir George Grand, Amsterdam.

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*Thomas Mss*

TO JOHN P. MERCKLÉ.

Paris, Oct<sup>o</sup> 9<sup>th</sup>, 1777.

SIR,—We have rec<sup>d</sup> several letters from you written in a menacing stile, as if we had failed in the fulfilment of our engagements with you; you must be sensible we never were privy to any Contract with you, nor accountable for anything you had contracted

for. But the sole motive of our paying the Ballance due Mess<sup>rs</sup> Delaps was as well to extricate you as to free Cap<sup>t</sup> Cleveland & his ship from the prodigious expence he had been at for several Months, & that our writing to M<sup>r</sup> Grand was in order to take the articles you had engaged for on our own account directly, as your remittances had failed ; at the same time, as we must, in Consequence of taking them, make ourselves accountable, we referr'd the articles to M<sup>r</sup> Grand for his examination, & if he approved of them, he was to receive & pay for them on our account ; this is simply the state of this affair. Wherein have we failed on our part, & what right have you to complain in the indecent stile you have of us ? The articles you had engaged are, on examination, found liable to many objections, which justly discharge us from troubling ourselves any farther on this subject. At the same time we have directed M<sup>r</sup> Simeon Deane, who goes for Amsterdam to-morrow via Dunkirk, to examine them personally, & to receive or reject them, as he shall find them on examination & enquiry ; if he should reject them, as he certainly must if he find them improper or not well purchased, you can have no ground of complaint against us on any account ; but if the Committee with whom you contracted engaged for such kind of Articles as you have procured, your affair is with them & not with us. We do not think it becoming us to make any observation on the stile in which you have treated us in your Letters on the subject ; strict justice to every one & a punctual performance of our engagements are the only objects worthy of our attention.

We are, &c.,  
B. FRANKLIN.  
SILAS DEANE.

To Mr. Merkle.

*Thomas Mss.*



TO MESSRS. MORRELL.

Paris, 9<sup>th</sup> Oct<sup>o</sup>, 1777.

GENTLEMEN,—This will be handed you by M<sup>r</sup> Simon Deane, a Brother of mine, who has letters to you from M<sup>r</sup> Grand ; having made sale of the Lugger left in your Care, I have this day wrote you on the Subject. You will oblige me by sending the acc<sup>ts</sup> of Disbursements on her since in your Care, which will be discharged. My Brother visits your place solely on commercial purposes, & I refer you to him for any information which may be of service to your House ; and should you be disposed to adventure to America, I can recommend my Brother as one well acquainted in every part of that Commerce, and on whom you may rely.

I am, &amp;c.,

SILAS DEANE.

Mess<sup>rs</sup> V. D. V. Morrell & fils.*Thomas Mss.*

TO MESSRS. EMERY.

Paris, Oct<sup>o</sup> 9<sup>th</sup>, 1777.

GENTLEMEN,—This comes by my Brother, who I take the liberty of recommending to your House as a Person well acquainted with every Part of the American Commerce, & on whose information you may rely. He designs returning in a few weeks for America, & will establish his House in Virginia ; any engagements you may make with him, you may rely on his fidelity in the execution of his Part. As he will tarry a day or two in Dunkirk, I refer you to him for Particulars, & meantime have the Honor to remain respectfully y<sup>rs</sup>, &c.,

SILAS DEANE.

Mess<sup>rs</sup> Emery Pere & fils.*Thomas Mss.*

TO MESSRS. DELAP.

Paris, Oct. 10<sup>th</sup>, 1777.

DEAR SIR,—Yours of the 4<sup>th</sup> to Mess<sup>rs</sup> Franklin, Deane & Lee is before me, & I now inclose you a copy of mine of the 19<sup>th</sup> of August last, since which I have had none of yours. M<sup>r</sup> T. is in the Country for a few days; in the meantime the measures you have taken, as well with respect to the vessels detained as the Prizes, are undoubtedly the most proper, & I hope you will yet succeed so as to get liberty for the Prize to go to Bilboa, where our correspondence is with the house of Mess<sup>rs</sup> Gardoqui, fils & C<sup>o</sup>, and, if it be practicable, I wish you would engage the Pilots to deliver to the Commanders of Prize Vessels arriving in future, directions how to conduct on their entering the River or being examined, which will be singly, to shew American Colours, keep their prisoners (if any) out of sight, and report the vessel from Boston. But as two Prizes are now detained at Nantes which were reported from S<sup>t</sup> Eustatia, & as you have many busy persons in Bourdeaux as well as Nantes, the safest way may be to advise them for Bilboa & to apply there to Mess<sup>rs</sup> Gardoqui & C<sup>o</sup>. These Prizes are made by Privateers on private acc<sup>t</sup>, consequently are not at our controul, & all we can do is to advise. We wish you to treet the Bill drawn by M<sup>r</sup> Rob<sup>t</sup> Morris & C<sup>o</sup> as they directed, but we have no Correspondence with M<sup>r</sup> Thom<sup>s</sup> Morris, who has never given us any information on the subject of the Bills under protest, & though we are sorry to find his affairs in the train they appear to be, we cannot at present meddle in the affair. The Bill drawn by M<sup>r</sup> R. Morris, R. H. Lee, &c., if, on application to M<sup>r</sup> Lee & to M<sup>r</sup> Morris as directed, they neglect to supply the funds for the discharge of [it], you will notice us of it immediately. We hope remittances may soon come to your hands to reimburse you for this Bill and your other advances, which you would not have been called upon to make but from the



unhappy interruption of our commerce. As this Bill is directed ultimately to us, if not taken up by others, we shall punctually see it discharged. The casks containing the clothing you will take care of until we write you again, which shall be by next post, when we will give particular directions as well respecting them as others, which you will probably soon receive. M<sup>r</sup> Ross is now here, and as he is intrusted with the affairs of M<sup>r</sup> Rob<sup>t</sup> Morris's House in France as well as elsewhere, I shall consult with him, & writing you in the course of next week. I hope next month to have the pleasure of seeing you in Bourdeaux, and of adjusting in Person the transactions between us. My most respectful compl<sup>ts</sup> to Miss Delap.

I am, &c.,  
SILAS DEANE.

Mess<sup>rs</sup> Delap.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO — CASTELAN.

Paris, Oct<sup>r</sup> 11<sup>th</sup>, 1777.

SIR,—Yours of the 24<sup>th</sup> ult<sup>o</sup> I received & sent it to M<sup>r</sup> Thomas Morris, who returned it to me without reply. I am sorry you should suffer any the least disappointment in consequence of your doing business for any one American, but am unable to give you any light into the conduct of M<sup>r</sup> Thomas Morris in this affair. I would advise you to write to M<sup>r</sup> John Ross at Nantes & inform him of the circumstances of this affair, & on whose account & by whose immediate order the Druggs were shipped. If in this or any other affair I can be of service to you I shall receive and execute your commands with pleasure, & am, with due respect,  
Sir,

Yours &c.,  
SILAS DEANE.

Mr. Castelan.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO SIR ROBERT FINLAY.

Paris, Oct<sup>r</sup> 11<sup>th</sup> 1777.

DEAR SIR,—I received yours of the 29 ult<sup>o</sup> & the Books some days afterwards. I think the Nankeens well bought and also the Pepper. The Drugs you mention will answer well in America, but for the Cinnamon, it is not in demand. The Consumption is but small at any time. I am much obliged to you for the useful information you have given me in regard to those sales. The season is too far advanced to think of sending out goods from the North, & the orders lately published at Cadiz, both by the Danish & Swedish Consuls to the ships Captains belonging to their states respecting the American commerce, appear very discouraging. I am, however, not the less obliged to you for your information & offers of service. I send you inclosed the Letter you favoured me with & my thanks for the communication of it. All Europe seems intent on the Fate of this Campaign; should it be very fortunate for America, the independance of the Colonies will be established beyond a doubt, & their Commerce will soon become more open though less profitable to individuals, who may be fortunate in present adventures. If the reverse, it may occasion serious reflections on the subjugation of America or its reunion to England, which may have equally beneficial effects in the end. Meantime, I am impatiently waiting for news from Howe as well as Burgoyne. The next intelligence must be very important, & I shall acquaint you with it if it arrive here before it comes to Bourdeaux.

I have the Honor, &amp;c.,

SILAS DEANE.

I design spending one week in Nov<sup>r</sup> at Bourdeaux, by which time I hope to know how the campaign is likely to issue in America, on which so much depends. Sir Robert Finlay.

*Thomas Mss.*



TO SIMEON DEANE.

Paris, Oct<sup>r</sup> 12<sup>th</sup>, 1777.

DEAR BROTHER,—As you will probably have left Dunkirk before this could reach there, I send directly to Amsterdam. Since parting I have received a Letter from Mess<sup>rs</sup> Clifford & Teyssset, by which I find they have rec<sup>d</sup> a sum of money, avails of Powder that had been intercepted & sold in England; this, as they state it, makes a Ballance in my favor of £2,514.13 which you will receive & at the same time take of them their acc<sup>t</sup> current. Try, if possible, to negociate with M<sup>r</sup> Grand the Continental Loan office notes, or at least know of him at what rate they can be negociated in Holland, if at all. Try it in this manner: propose to M<sup>r</sup> Grand to have £10,000 sterling of these notes discounted, inform him that they are issued payable on Interest at six pr. c<sup>t</sup>, that at the same time the difficulties of remittance are so great in America that they may be bought at a very great discount in the Country, and the risque is solely on the success of the Americans; if successful the notes will undoubtedly be paid honorably, if otherwise it may not be in their Power. This is the true state of the Case, for I would by no means represent it otherwise than the truth, & though I have not the most flattering prospects of succeeding at this moment, yet I cannot omit making the proposal; two Frigates are arrived at L'Orient, one Capt. Thompson of the Polly, & Hinman in the Alfred; they left Portsmouth the 22<sup>d</sup> of August & say that Sir John Johnson had been defeated & slain with 300 of his Party at Fort Stanwix, but they have no Letters, as I can hear, for us. Holker has wrote Sabbatier that he approves well of his assortment, has translated it, & is procuring the Goods; to my surprize have heard nothing of Williams since he left us. As Howe is undoubtedly gone up Chesepeak Bay I think N. Carolina must be the only place we can send to with

any safety for Procuring Tobacco, but a few days must bring us farther intelligence; meantime

I am, &c.,

SILAS DEANE.

Simeon Deane, Esq<sup>r</sup>.

*Thomas Mss.*

To ——— EYRIES.

Paris, Oct<sup>r</sup> 13<sup>th</sup>, 1777.

SIR,—I sent letters last week by express to Havre to the care of Cap<sup>t</sup> Hynson or Cap<sup>t</sup> Folger, & to my surprize am this moment told they can neither of them be found, which is owing, I suppose, to the ignorance of the messenger who was addressed to Mess<sup>rs</sup> Baudry & Boullongre at Havre. I must pray you to find Cap<sup>t</sup> Hynson or Cap<sup>t</sup> Folger, & bring them to these Mess<sup>rs</sup> by whom I am told the express still tarries. In any thing which may be in my Power to serve you, please to command me. M<sup>r</sup> Eyries most certainly knows where these people are.

I have the honor to remain, &c.,

SILAS DEANE.

M<sup>r</sup> Eyries.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO CAPT. THOMAS THOMPSON.

Paris, 13<sup>th</sup> Oct<sup>r</sup>, 1777.

SIR,—We received from Mess<sup>rs</sup> Gourlade & C<sup>o</sup> an account of your arrival, & were informed that you had a Private Letter for us, which we have not yet received; conclude it must come to hand in the course of this week. Mean time we desire you would inform us in a Letter under cover of Mess<sup>rs</sup> Gourlade & C<sup>o</sup> what is the situation of your vessels & what their destination, as well as what articles of supplies you are ordered to purchase, &c., so far as may be consistent with your instructions to communicate to us, that so far as any thing depend on or may be expected from us we may



be apprized as early as possible. We recommend to you to write no Letters but under M<sup>r</sup> Gourlade's cover, who will inclose them to M<sup>r</sup> Chaumont, by which means we shall receive them with less danger of their being intercepted & opened. We are, with compliments to Capt. Hinman as well as yourself on your safe arrival, Sir,

Your most obed servts, &c.,

B. FRANKLIN,  
SILAS DEANE.

Commodore Thompson.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO MESSRS. GOURLADE.

Paris, 13<sup>th</sup> Oct<sup>r</sup>, 1777.

GENTLEMEN,—Yours of the 6<sup>th</sup> is before us. When the Private Letter referred to & the situation of the Frigates shall be communicated to us, we shall be in a situation for forming a judgment & writing you more particularly; meantime we inclose a letter for Capt. Thompson, which we take the Liberty to ask you to deliver to him. We must rely on y<sup>r</sup> assisting these officers, as well as careen their vessels & procure the necessary refreshments, as in having the Prizes disposed of to the best possible advantage. We have the honor to remain, Gentlemen, your most obed<sup>t</sup> & very

humble servants,

B. FRANKLIN,  
SILAS DEANE.

Mess<sup>rs</sup> Gourlade & C<sup>o</sup>.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO MESSRS. DESGRAY AND BEAUGEARD.

Paris, Oct<sup>r</sup> 13<sup>th</sup>, 1777.

GENTLEMEN,—I desired M<sup>r</sup> Williams to receive & settle your acc<sup>ts</sup> of the Disbursements for Capt. Wickes, which hope he has done, tho' I have not rec<sup>d</sup> any Let-

ter from him since his leaving this for Nantes ; if he has not already done it, please to send to him your acc<sup>t</sup>. I assure you that Capt. Wickes gave the Commissioners in his letters a full acc<sup>t</sup> of the hospitable & kind reception he met with from y<sup>r</sup> House, for which he & we are much obliged to you. Two American Frigates are arrived at Port L'Orient, to one of which I wish that the sailor, John Risdal, may be sent, if he is in a condition to make the voyage to America. You will be the best judges what few things he is in absolute need of, which pray you to furnish him with, as far as mentioned in yours of the 26 ult<sup>o</sup>, if you find he needs to that amount ; but you are sensible that to give him money will not be of such certain use to him as clothes & other necessaries, in which must refer to your discretion. I have rec<sup>d</sup> two Letters on the subject, to which have taken the liberty to inclose you my answers. The Capt<sup>s</sup> of the Frigates have not as yet sent us the state of their ships, but it is probable we may ship the Salt Petre in one or both of them ; we shall acquaint you with our determination in a few days. I shall always be happy in rendering every service in my Power to you & your friends, & therefore wish to know whether M<sup>r</sup> Le Chev. de Suasse de Keregan proposes to serve by Land or Sea, as I must inform you that such a number of officers have gone to America to serve in the former department, that I cannot give him any Encouragement of finding Employ ; Though I am ready to give him Letters to my friends, who will shew him every civility due to a stranger of Rank, but at the same time think I ought to inform him of the situation of affairs in that department. In the Marine, officers of skill & experience may find great Encouragement. I shall be very happy in hearing from you often, & have the honor to remain with the utmost Esteem, Gentlemen, &c.,

SILAS DEANE.

Mess<sup>rs</sup> Desgray Beauguard & C<sup>o</sup>

*Thomas Mss.*



TO MESSRS. CORRIE.

Paris, 13<sup>th</sup> Oct<sup>r</sup>, 1777.

GENTLEMEN,—Since the receipt of yours of the 22<sup>d</sup> ult<sup>o</sup>, the several Bills drawn by Capt. Johnson on acc<sup>t</sup> of the Lexington disbursements have been presented & paid. Capt. Johnson assured us that he had met with the most friendly treatment from y<sup>r</sup> house whilst at Morlaix, for which you have our most sincere thanks, & are sorry that his voyage after leaving you proved so unfortunate. Should any of the ships belonging to the Congress put into y<sup>r</sup> Port in future, we rely on y<sup>r</sup> friendly offices to them, & that you will inform us of their arrival by the next Post after they come in. With the utmost Esteem I am, in behalf of Mess<sup>rs</sup> Franklin, Lee, & self,

Yours etc.,

SILAS DEANE.

To Messrs. Corrie &amp; Co.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO JONATHAN WILLIAMS.

Paris, Oct<sup>r</sup> 14<sup>th</sup>, 1777.

SIR,—I have received nothing from you since you left us, which I am really unable to account for. I this morning saw a sample of the Cloths said to be making up by orders of Monthieu. They confirm my suspicions; but Monthieu noticing [this], returned [them] to the Taylor, a stranger to me. I have only to caution you how you receive them, if they will not fully answer the comparison with those sent by Mess<sup>rs</sup> Holker & C<sup>o</sup>, which were by contract to be the standard. Pray urge on the ship. It is probable the Bales of M<sup>r</sup> B. M. [Beaumarchais] will all be freighted in his own ship; be that as it may, a full freight & more will be ready for the other. I am impatient to hear from you. Tell M<sup>r</sup> King my Brother waits an answer to his

last to him. My Comp<sup>ts</sup> to that Gent., & believe me ever, &c.

SILAS DEANE.

M<sup>r</sup> Williams.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO MESSRS. DELAP.

Paris, Oct<sup>o</sup> 14<sup>th</sup>, 1777.

DEAR SIR,—I wrote you the 11<sup>th</sup>, to which refer; I have now only time to desire that the Casks Containing the Cloathes already arrived, or that may come from Languedoc or elsewhere in the Course of this Month, may be sent to Nantes, to Care of M<sup>r</sup> Williams, who will receive and pay the Freight for them; please to write him a Line informing him of their being sent. I send to your Care two Lett<sup>rs</sup> for M<sup>r</sup> B. Duffield, who was with M<sup>r</sup> Cum<sup>s</sup>, & supposed now to be at Bordeaux; if so, you will Deliver them, and inform him that D<sup>r</sup> Franklin has some effects for him; but if you are uncertain where he is at pres<sup>t</sup>, hold the Letters & charge us the postage, informing us thereof. I shall be a more punctual Correspond<sup>t</sup> in future, but you will find by my last that I never rec<sup>d</sup> any answer to mine of the 19th of Sep<sup>r</sup>. I wish to know how you make out with the prize, & am, with much esteem, &c.,

Yours,

SILAS DEANE.

Mess<sup>rs</sup> Delaps.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO MESSRS. PLAIRNE AND PENET.

Paris, 15<sup>th</sup> Oct<sup>r</sup>, 1777.

GENTLEMEN,—Yours of the 11<sup>th</sup> is before me, in which I find that instead of being explicit on the subject of mine by M<sup>r</sup> Williams, you have recourse to a subterfuge as weak as it is groundless, to avoid accounting for Effects acknowledg<sup>d</sup>ly in your hands; before ever you rec<sup>d</sup> the 86 HH<sup>ds</sup> of Tobacco & four HH<sup>ds</sup>



of Furs, M<sup>r</sup> Soulier acknowledged to have rec<sup>d</sup> ninety thousand Liv<sup>s</sup> on acc<sup>t</sup> of Mess<sup>rs</sup> Franklin, Deane & Lee, which he promised to pay to their order; when called upon for his account he brought the two Bills for 4,000 Liv<sup>s</sup> in charge against them in their joint account; as you are not ignorant of this, is it not surprising that you can pretend the 40,000 Liv<sup>s</sup> were the avails of the Tobacco? nothing can be more trifling or absurd. With respect to the furs, I refer you to a Perusal of M<sup>r</sup> Rob<sup>t</sup> Morris's Letter, an extract of which you sent me under your own hand, in which you were expressly ordered to account with me therefor; is the payment of this money to another person to pass for accompting? I ask nothing of you but simple justice & that you fullfil the orders you have rec<sup>d</sup>, w<sup>h</sup> I trust a regard for y<sup>r</sup> reputation as Merch<sup>ts</sup> will induce you to do without further application. When the Comm<sup>rs</sup> of the United States receive favors of you they will acknowledge them, & when reduced to the necessity of asking them they may be the proper subject for y<sup>r</sup> very low insult & abuse & not before; in the mean time they are too conscious of their own character to notice it. I have only to add that I expect you will, in answer to this Letter, let me know explicitly whether you will acc<sup>t</sup> with me or not for the Tobacco & Furrs, that I may know what part to take.

I am, &c.,

SILAS DEANE.

Messrs. Plairne, Penet & Co.

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO JONATHAN WILLIAMS.

Passy, Oct<sup>r</sup> 15<sup>th</sup>, 1777.

SIR,—This is to desire you to lodge in the hands of Mess<sup>rs</sup> Borard, Frere & C<sup>o</sup>, of Port L'Orient, 20,000 Liv<sup>s</sup> at the disposal of M<sup>r</sup> Jn<sup>o</sup> Ross; as soon as you have done it, please to inform me, & I will take the measure necessary in consequence of this payment.

The sum you are authorized to draw for, in case you need the whole of it, shall be kept good, independent of this. M<sup>r</sup> Lee says that two prizes remain undisposed of, w<sup>h</sup> he insinuates prevents a settlement of Gruel's & Penet's acc<sup>t</sup>; one I find in the Brig of w<sup>h</sup> we have before talked, the other I never heard of before. Be it as it may, Gruel's nor Penet's acc<sup>ts</sup> have not, as I conceive, any concern with these Prizes; however, you know my Proposals as to the Brig, & I have only to urge that she may be got ready as soon as possible for sea in the manner I directed. It is indifferent to me whether the Public or my Brother take her; in either case the orders I gave are the proper ones. My Brother is now at Amsterdam, & will return in the course of next week. He luckily has had some monies lodged there for him, & desirous of seeing what could be done in that quarter, it induced him to defer being explicit before he set out on this subject; on his return he will determine, & if he take her, will acc<sup>t</sup> for her immediately, but not to Mess<sup>rs</sup> Gruel or Penet. I wish you to urge on the separation of the arms with all the expedition possible, & let me know what quantity will be ready next month, & how soon the vessel will be ready. There will be more than a full freight for her, independent of the Bales of M<sup>r</sup> B. M. [Beaumarchais], which he will incline to freight, possibly in his own ship. My compliments to your Brother. Shall write to you in answer to y<sup>rs</sup> to the Commissioners next post; for myself see no objection to the agreement with the Cap<sup>t</sup>, nor do I apprehend any will arise.

I am, &c.,

SILAS DEANE.

Mr. Williams.

P. S. I have again seen a sample of Cloths making, it is said, by Monthieu's orders. They are shocking, & not worth half Price, & will not answer at any rate; you must examine them strictly; the rule is plain.

N. B. Wrote you 17th of Oct<sup>o</sup> to Mess<sup>rs</sup> Delaps &



M<sup>r</sup>. M<sup>c</sup>Crevy, by M<sup>r</sup>. Harmansen; see Copy of the former on file; the latter was not copied, it was only acknowledging his of the 11th.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO JOHN KING.

Passy, 16<sup>th</sup> Oct<sup>r</sup>, 1777.

SIR,—Your Letter to my Brother Simeon Deane I received, and as he was absent, I opened it. The contents will be agreeable to him, as he communicated to me what he had wrote to you. I expect his return in the course of next week, & believe he will succeed well in his Northern Journey, as he will probably spend the winter in Europe. I flatter myself that y<sup>r</sup> correspondence may be of very great service to each other. If in any thing I can render you any services or y<sup>r</sup> House, shall do it with pleasure. I shall write his Excellency Patrick Henry per Packet, & also M<sup>r</sup>. Wyth, as I shall not have time to write by you; make them my most sincere compliments. Wishing you a good voyage,  
I am, &c.,

SILAS DEANE.

Mr. King.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO SIR GEORGE GRAND.

Passy, 18<sup>th</sup> Oct<sup>r</sup>, 1777.

DEAR SIR,—I wrote my Brother under Cover to you, and mentioned the Discounting or passing the Congress notes with you, since w<sup>h</sup> M<sup>r</sup>. Carmichael communicated to me y<sup>rs</sup> to him on that subject. The Notes are issued for 500 dollars each, or a larger sum. They are regularly given out at an office established for that purpose. They are payable in three years, with Interest at six per cent. per annum, and will undoubtedly be punctually discharged at that time. A friend of mine has a few of these notes, and I will endeavour to send you one per this or next post, if they can be passed,

the Commissioners can issue them here, having Power from the Congress sufficient for that purpose. The last news from America was of the 21 of Sep<sup>r</sup> by a Packet Boat from Portsmouth, but having been obliged to throw the Packet overboard we have only the acc<sup>t</sup> of the Captain, who says that Burgoyne had been repulsed, & that he had lost in different actions 2,500 men killed & made Prisoners. The acc<sup>ts</sup> from Maryland are as late as the 24 August, at which time Gen<sup>l</sup> Howe had not landed any where, but had been for near a month beating along the Coast, the wind directly contrary. On the whole, though it is probable he must have entered the Bay of Chesepeak about that time, he could not have landed before about the beginning of Sep<sup>r</sup>, & under the circumstances of having been 6 weeks at Sea with his troops in the hottest season of the year, & the landing at a place where fevers & agues rage annually in the autumn months, the chance is greatly ag<sup>t</sup> him. However, a short time will determine what will be the fate of this Campaign, & consequently of the war, most probably. I am in hopes of soon having the Pleasure of embracing you here, & in the mean time

am, &c.,

SILAS DEANE.

S<sup>r</sup> Geo. Grand.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO SIMEON DEANE.

Passy, 18<sup>th</sup> Oct<sup>r</sup>, 1777.

DEAR BROTHER,—I wrote you the 12 respecting the Congress Loan Notes; if you can do any thing towards negotiating a sum of them, I will engage to procure them in season; it will be a most essential service to the Public, even if they pass at first on some discount, but by Letters from Sir Geo. Grand I hope the discount will not be considerable. I received a Letter from M<sup>r</sup> King for you, in which he agrees to accept your Proposals, as he will undoubtedly sail in the course of next week from Nantes, it will not be to



any purpose for you to attempt to write him. I answered him in your behalf, that you would not mention the rate of Commission at which he had agreed to do your business. News from Portsmouth of the 21 Sept<sup>r</sup> says that Burgoyne had lost in several actions 2,500 men; and from Maryland on the 24 Aug<sup>t</sup> Howe had not Landed any where, the wind had been ag<sup>t</sup> him, & he was seen the 21<sup>st</sup> off the Capes, beating to the southward; it was reported on the 22<sup>d</sup> that he had entered the Bay. By this you will see that the News from England is certainly premature.

I am, &c.,

SILAS DEANE.

P. S. I have had Letters from Holker; the Goods are procuring. I expected a Letter from you, from Dunkirk, but have had none.

To Simeon Deane.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO MESSRS. MORREL.

Paris, 19<sup>th</sup> Oct<sup>r</sup>, 1777.

GENTLEMEN,—Yours of the 15<sup>th</sup> came to hand last Evening. I most sincerely condole with you on the loss of a son, a Brother & Partner, & one with whom I had the honor of being acquainted, & for whom I had the greatest Esteem. I am much obliged to you for the Civilities shewn my Brother, & hope your acquaintance may be of mutual advantage. M<sup>r</sup> Chaumont happens to be out of Town, but will return in a day or two, immediately after which he will write particularly on the subject of the Lugger, for which it may be necessary that you pass a Bill of sale, for which I will indemnify you. The sole reason for putting this little troublesome Vessel into other hands was the having the sale bear the greater appearance of reality, and of her having been your property, as was reported. I conceive there will be no difficulty with the ministry, but, as it is possible, I wish to know what the vessel

will sell for; if she will fetch any thing near the price she cost us, which was £500 St., I would prefer selling her at once & finishing the affair. You will oblige me by informing me what can be had for her at Dunkirk in your next Letter.

I am, &c.,

SILAS DEANE.

Mess<sup>rs</sup> Morrel & Fils.

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO JONATHAN WILLIAMS.

Passy, 19<sup>th</sup> Oct<sup>r</sup>, 1777.

DEAR SIR,—In reply to yours of the 9<sup>th</sup>, I have to inform you that your agreement with the Cap<sup>t</sup> of the Two Brothers & the mate is as low as I expected. Capt. Hynson, I presume, is by this time with you, & suppose in Chagrin, tho' without cause. I shall take no notice of his unkind insinuations, but if he is not contented with the vessel, he is at Liberty to find a better employ. I hope she may be ready for sea by the end of this month, & that the sum allowed the Cap<sup>t</sup> in Gratification is conditional on her safe arrival & return, which I think y<sup>r</sup> Letter expresses; it is always best to have some tye on these People. With regard to M<sup>r</sup> Pritchard, I am to this moment a stranger to his story, but you know I am unwilling to have any one suffer in the service of our Country more than the unavoidable chances of war oblige them; & with respect to him, as well as our other Countrymen who arrive, as you say, pennyless, I am for procuring them opportunities for being employed, & relieving them in the most frugal & easy manner w<sup>h</sup> our and their circumstances permit. I want an answer to the Queries in my last, when the large vessel & the other will be ready (the latter I wish you to give another name to than the *Two Brothers*), also respecting the state of the Magazines, &c., &c. I have given you already my opinion on the Letter you wrote the Commissioners



jointly; you will probably have a Letter from them soon. I shall be out of town for three or 4 days, but y<sup>r</sup> Letters will come to me as usual, tho' I may not probably answer them 'till my return.

I am, with much esteem, &c.,

SILAS DEANE.

Since writing the above, the agreement with the Cap<sup>t</sup> has been signed, & will be forwarded by D<sup>r</sup> Franklin.

M<sup>r</sup> Williams.

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO CAPT. JOHN FOLGER.

Passy, near Paris, Oct<sup>r</sup> 19<sup>th</sup>, 1777.

SIR,—We have considered your Proposition of Returning in case of the Accident you mention on this Coast, and approve of the same. You will therefore act accordingly. We wish you a good Voyage, and are,

Sir,

Your humble Servants,

B. FRANKLIN.

SILAS DEANE.

To Captn. John Folger,

Care of M<sup>r</sup> Jn<sup>o</sup> Moylan, Merchant, Havre de Grace.

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO CAPT. JOSEPH HYNSON.

Passy, Oct<sup>r</sup> 19<sup>th</sup>, 1777.

SIR,—I received yours of the 11<sup>th</sup>, & saw that which you wrote to my Brother. The reasons for my giving Capt. Folger the preference in the Packet were too obvious to leave any excuse for your complaints at not having the first offer. I will not make any remarks on it, but in a word say you are at Liberty to take the Command of the Brig at Nantes or not, as you choose.

I only ask that you will determine at once, & if you decline it, you will, I doubt not, find some employ more agreeable. I design the brig shall be ready for sea as soon as possible, therefore any delay must be prejudicial, & your answer given to M<sup>r</sup> Williams to forward to me will much oblige me. I have ever wished to serve all my Countrymen individually, as well as in general, & from the destination of this Vessel I had reason to think her a preferable offer for you than simply to carry out the Packet, but you are master of your own Determinations.

I am, &c.,

SILAS DEANE.

Capt. Hynson.

P.S. I did not receive yours of the 11<sup>th</sup> until last Evening.

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO MESSRS. DESEGRAY AND BEAUGEARD.

Paris, Oct<sup>r</sup> 19<sup>th</sup>, 1777.

GENTLEMEN,—I did myself the honor of writing to you the 13<sup>th</sup>, & last Evening received yours of the 15<sup>th</sup>. The Salt Petre has not been forgot, but the Vessel designed to receive it is not ready. It is agreeable to us to receive only the 1,500 or 1,520 Bags of Salt Petre; the agreement was made generally for a certain quantity, without specifying the number of Bags. As soon as the invoice is received the remittance shall be made, as I mentioned the other day to y<sup>r</sup> worthy Partner here. I most sincerely join with you in hoping that Capt. Wickes will arrive safe in America.

I am, &c.,

SILAS DEANE.

Mess<sup>rs</sup> Desegray, Beaugeard & Co.

*Thomas Mss.*



TO MESSRS. LAGOANERE.

Paris, 19<sup>th</sup> Oct<sup>r</sup>, 1777.

GENTLEMEN,—We did ourselves the honor of replying to yours of the 20<sup>th</sup> ult<sup>o</sup>, since which are favored with yours of the 27<sup>th</sup>, which came to hand last Evening only, so that I presume this will hardly reach you before the affair of Capt. C<sup>s</sup> Prize will be adjusted. We wrote Mess<sup>rs</sup>. Gardoque & Fils at Bilboa to honor the Bills for C[leveland's] repairs, which hope has been done. As to the Prize mentioned, it is to be hoped that it may be disposed of at some rate or other, & the less the loss the better; some must be inevitable, circumstanced as we are at present. In future, should prizes arrive, the most prudent method, as we apprehend, will be to have them reported as Vessels belonging to America, & to dispose of them without loss of time, keeping every thing secret until the sale is made. Unacquainted as the Commissioners at this distance must be with the modes of Procedure with you in such Cases, they can only give general directions, relying on y<sup>r</sup> prudence & knowledge of the situation of affairs to do the best which can be done in these affairs. I have the honor to remain, with the utmost respect, &c.,

SILAS DEANE.

Mess<sup>rs</sup>. Lagoanere & C<sup>o</sup>*Thomas Mss.*

TO JONATHAN WILLIAMS.

Paris, Oct<sup>r</sup> 24<sup>th</sup>, 1777.

DEAR SIR,—I returned but last Evening from Fontainebleau, & had not time to write you by M<sup>r</sup> Montieu, who was then setting out. The Cloths w<sup>h</sup> I had so much suspicion of prove not to be those made for M<sup>r</sup> Montieu, nor can I find who they are designed for; you will, however, make the proper examination & comparison. The expence of cleaning the Fuzees ought to be at the accounts of the sellers, as their Contract was

to deliver them at Nantes ; the misfortune, therefore, I conceive must be theirs & not ours. I wrote you on the 17, & enclosed a letter for Hynson, which you may open & read. This wrong-headed, conceited Fool has at last turned out one of the most ungrateful of Traitors, & instead of going to Nantes, as he had wrote me, has fled into England, there to help himself by telling all & much more than he had any knowledge of. It is fortunate for us that he knows nothing, but this will not prevent his pretensions to knowing every thing, & of course it is to be hoped that his new Patrons will believe every thing he invents to serve himself. This renders it necessary that another Captain should be provided for the Vessel fitting out without delay. As I know not the Captains now at Nantes, except Capt. Bell & Capt. Adams, & I suppose that the former designs going out with Capt. Young, I must leave it with you to engage either of them, or any other who will be willing to accept the offer, & in whom you can confide, & urge you to have the Vessel ready as soon as possible. My Brother is not yet returned, nor have I letters from him since his leaving Dunkirk, but expect him in a few days at Paris. I am impatiently waiting y<sup>r</sup> answer to my last, & to know in particular how soon Capt. N[icholson's] ship may be ready.

I am, &c.,

SILAS DEANE.

P. S. Hope you have not forgot the old Jamaica Spirits.

*Thomas Mss.*

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MESSRS. DESEGRAY AND BEAUGEARD.

Paris, Oct<sup>r</sup> 24<sup>th</sup> 1777.

GENTLEMEN,—Yours of the 15<sup>th</sup> is before me. Our agreement for the Salt Petre was for about 120 Tons ; the difference of 20 Baggs cannot be an object of any consequence, & as soon as we can obtain the permission



of the minister for shipping it, which we expect in the course of a few days, shall send the proper directions for its being shipped. We spoke some days since to your Partner, M<sup>r</sup> Beaugeard, Fils, for the invoice of it, which as soon as rec<sup>d</sup> we shall make the remittance as we agreed. We received a Letter from a young man who went to embark from S<sup>t</sup> Maloes for America; his name is Chandler, who is in want of some assistance; we ask you to deliver the inclosed Lette<sup>r</sup> to him, & furnish him on our acct., as far as six or eight Louis D'ors. By yours of the 19<sup>th</sup> ult<sup>o</sup> came to hand this instant, we learn that you had drawn on us for the sum of 3,489. 11. 6 at 30 days, payable to M<sup>r</sup> Olive, but there are two Bills presented, overdrawn by Capt. Wickes in your favor, indorsed over to Mess<sup>rs</sup> Olive for 3,484. 18. 6. The other is drawn by Capt. Nicholson, at 30 days, in your favor, & indorsed by you to Mess<sup>r</sup> Olive for 4,703. 18; of the Latter we have not had advice from Capt. Nicholson. I shall accept the Bills, but must pray you to explain in your next the Error in the first, and, if in your Power to do it, on what account that by Capt. Nicholson was drawn. I shall write Capt. Nicholson also on the subject; as I have no doubt of the Bills being genuine, shall order them paid, but at the same time judge that a line from you on the subject is requisite. You say that the Salt Petre may be shipped at L'Orient without difficulty; if so, we pray you to write to Capt. Thompson of the Frigate Raleigh to address of Mons<sup>r</sup> Gourlade, & if the Capt. can receive it, that you would send it to him. We shall also write to him on the same subject by this post; inclosed you have a Letter for the Chev<sup>r</sup> Suassee de Kevegan, to the Hon<sup>'ble</sup> Committee for Maritime affairs in Philadelphia.

I am, &c.,

SILAS DEANE.

Mess<sup>rs</sup> Desegray, Beaugeard, fils & C<sup>o</sup>

*Thomas Mss.*

To ——— CHANDLER.

Paris, Oct<sup>r</sup> 25<sup>th</sup> 1777.

SIR,—This will be handed you by Mess<sup>rs</sup> Desegray, Beaugeard, fils & C<sup>o</sup>, to whom we have wrote to supply you with six or eight Louis D'ors. Though you may have a Claim on the Public for a considerable sum, yet you must be sensible that we know nothing of the affair, & that this is neither a proper place for it, nor is it in our power to settle such accounts here. We are always ready to assist to the utmost of our power our Countrymen in distress, but from the situation of our affair can go no farther than for absolute necessaries. As to your going to Nantes, you will act your own judgment; but as there are two Vessels at Port L'Orient, as well as several others at other places bound for America, we think that you can not be at a loss to procure a passage.

I am, Sir, &c.,

SILAS DEANE.

Mr<sup>r</sup> Chandler.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO THE MARINE COMMITTEE OF CONGRESS.

Paris, Oct<sup>r</sup> 25<sup>th</sup>, 1777.

GENTLEMEN,—The Chev. de Suasse de Kevegan will do himself the honor of waiting on you with this, which serves to introduce him as a young Gentleman of Family, & the particular friend of Mess<sup>rs</sup> Desegray, Beaugeard, fils & C<sup>o</sup> of S<sup>t</sup> Maloes, a House which has shewn the Americans the greatest civilities, as well as real services, which Capt. Wickes will particularly inform you of. The Chev. is desirous of entering into the service of the United States.

I have the honor to be, &c.,

SILAS DEANE.

The Hon. Marine Committee.

*Thomas Mss.*



To CAPT. JAMES NICHOLSON.

Paris, Oct<sup>r</sup> 25<sup>th</sup>, 1777.

SIR,—A Bill drawn by you the 16 ult<sup>o</sup>, payable to Mess<sup>rs</sup> Desegray, Beugeard, fils & C<sup>o</sup> for 4,703.18 was presented to me this morning for Payment. I now, therefore, write to desire you would inform me per return of this Courier, on what account this Bill was drawn, as you have not as yet given me advice of your drawing.

I am, &c.,

SILAS DEANE.

Capt. Nicholson.

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*Thomas Mss.*

To CAPT. JOSEPH HYNSON.

Paris, 26<sup>th</sup> Oct<sup>r</sup>, 1777.

SIR,—I do not write you to reproach you for the ungrateful & treacherous part you have acted, I leave this to your own Reflections; but as you have had the Assurance to write to me, & to propose the betraying your new Patrons in the manner you have wickedly, but in vain, attempted to betray your former, & with them your Country, I must tell you that no Letters from you will hereafter be rec<sup>d</sup> by

SILAS DEANE.

Capt. Hynson.

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*Thomas Mss.*

To MESSRS. DEUCHER AND KICHY.

Paris, Oct<sup>r</sup> 29, 1777.

GENTLEMEN,—I received yours of the 25<sup>th</sup> When M<sup>r</sup> King was here he mentioned that they were about to establish signs on the Coast of America, but did not understand it was settled when he came away. Cannot, therefore, give you any information on the subject, but would advise you to procure a good Pilot for the Coast, if to be had, & also Charts, which I believe

are had cheapest & and with the greatest certainty from London.

I am, &c.,

SILAS DEANE.

Mess<sup>rs</sup> Deucher, Kichy, & C<sup>o</sup>, Nantes.

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO JONATHAN WILLIAMS.

Paris, Oct<sup>r</sup> 29<sup>th</sup>, 1777.

DEAR SIR,—I received yours of the 25<sup>th</sup>; mine of the 24<sup>th</sup> will before this have told you what part Hynson has taken, & to that refer you respecting the Brig. M<sup>r</sup> Ross tells me that Capt. Williams expects Wages from the time of his arriving at Nantes. This you are sensible will not be right as to my Brother, & if he has any demand of that kind, it must be made elsewhere & not on this Voyage, if he undertakes it. As to the prizes, I have not seen M<sup>r</sup> W<sup>m</sup> Lee since his return to Calais, & therefore cannot say any more about them than to advise you to have your accounts ready with respect to any concern you may have had in them, & leave it to the persons concerned to call when they are disposed to settle. As to Mercier, I wish something decisive may be done with him, for he has given but too much suspicion of his being on the loose & trifling order. I am glad that so many of the arms are ready & the rest in so good a way, & hope now that the workmen are collected; something considerable will be done soon. We have been repeatedly promised that the Duties on those Cloths should not be exacted, & I still hope that what has been or may be paid may be refunded, but every Tax of this kind being a part of the Farm General, it requires time to arrange this affair. I have wrote to Cap<sup>t</sup> Thompson as to his officers; we have ways enough for money without paying men who are entering other service than that of the Congress. You told me the two prizes were confiscated; will they be sold at public



vendue, & can any thing be done in the purchase to advantage? You know how much Vessels are wanted in America at this time. We are anxiously expecting news from America w<sup>h</sup> I hope will determine many things at present uncertain.

I am, with sincere Esteem, D<sup>r</sup> Sir, &c.,

SILAS DEANE.

Mr Jn<sup>o</sup> Williams.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO CAPT. THOMAS THOMPSON.

Paris, 29<sup>th</sup> Oct<sup>r</sup>, 1777.

SIR,—Yours of the 24<sup>th</sup> I received. With respect to your seamen who contend with Capt. Nicholson, it is right the Public should pay their Board, but those who after their waiting have taken their passage with you ought to be considered in a different Light, & as you will have the advantage of their service, I must think that it lies with you to pay their billeting; as to those who are gone to America without discharging their Expences & without entering on board any of the Continental Vessels, I can only say that, as they might have entered on board some of those Vessels employed by Congress, but declined, I do not see the Justice of charging the Congress with their Expences. I will, however, lay your Letter before the Commissioners, who must jointly determine the affair, & in the mean time assure you that it will give me pleasure to render you every service in my power, & that

I am, &c.,

SILAS DEANE.

Capt. Thompson.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO CAPT. THOMAS BELL.

Paris, 29<sup>th</sup> Oct<sup>r</sup>, 1777.

SIR,—I received your of the 25<sup>th</sup>, and in return assure you I am not unmindfull of you, but our affairs here

are much as when you left Paris, & I am sorry to find that by the Conduct of affairs at Nantes there is no probability of raising the Commercial Credit of America. You know I did not expect any reformation in a certain person; am therefore no way disappointed as to him, but let me intreat you by the friendship I know you, as well as I, have for his Brother, to get as full knowledge as you can of his affairs. You may possibly render some service to his Brother in that way. I shall take notice of the money you say Pelvey received of M<sup>r</sup> Thomas Morris, & wish you could obtain an account of all his Disbursements on that adventure. I shall write you again before you leave France, meantime am, &c.,

SILAS DEANE.

Capt. Bell.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO JOHN KING & CO.

Paris, 30<sup>th</sup> Oct<sup>r</sup>, 1777.

GENTLEMEN,—This will be delivered you by Mess<sup>rs</sup> Mozendre & De L' Homme, whom I have recommended your House to address themselves to, and in return recommend them to your Civilities and those of your friends, as they propose making a considerable Commerce in your state, which I think may not only be of mutual advantage to them & you, but to the two Countries. I had the pleasure of seeing your Brother & Partner here some time since, & hope that he will be safely arrived with you before the receipt of this. He will acquaint you with his Engagements with my Brother, M<sup>r</sup> Simeon Deane, who I expect here from Amsterdam next [week]. I have the honor to be, with much esteem, &c.,

SILAS DEANE.

Mess<sup>rs</sup> King & C<sup>o</sup>

*Thomas Mss.*



TO BARNABAS DEANE.

Paris, Oct<sup>r</sup> 30<sup>th</sup>, 1777.

DEAR BROTHER,—I have recommended Mess<sup>rs</sup> Mozendre & De L'Homme to your address, should they make any Port in New England. They propose to settle in America, & I can but hope their addressing to you will be of mutual service. You will, I am confident, render them every assistance in the Disposal of their Cargoes which lies in y<sup>r</sup> Power, as well as for the returns of their effects in the manner most advantageous. Our Brother, Simeon Deane, is now at Amsterdam, but I expect him back in a few Days, & you may, accidents excepted, depend on his being in Virginia sometime in Feb<sup>y</sup> next. Shall write you again on his return, meantime am most affectionately, &c.,

SILAS DEANE.

Bar. Deane, Esq.

*Thomas Mss.*

To ——— JANZE.

Paris, Oct<sup>r</sup> 30<sup>th</sup>, 1777.

SIR,—I have been a few days into the Country, which prevented my answering your Letter. I must advise you to detain your Vessels until about the middle of next month, by which time you may know with certainty where Lord Howe's Fleet may be stationed, & of course be able to avoid them. I have advised my other friends the same. I send you inclosed a Letter for the House of John King & C<sup>o</sup>, Petersburg, Virginia, to w<sup>h</sup> House advise you to address y<sup>r</sup> Vessels. The reason is, one of the Partners has been here, & I have engaged him to do every thing in his Power to serve those that are addressed to them. He left Nantes last week in a very swift sailing Vessel for Virginia, & his house is one of the best in the Country. Pray inform me, per return of Courier, when your Vessels will sail. I am, &c.,

SILAS DEANE.

M<sup>r</sup> Janze.*Thomas Mss.*

TO T. MARTIN.

[Paris, Nov. 1, 1777.]

SIR,—I send you inclosed two letters, one for the House of Mess<sup>rs</sup> John King & Co. & the other for my Brother. Am sorry that you are indisposed, but Congratulate you on your improvement in the English Language, which you already write sufficiently well to transact common business. M<sup>r</sup> Izard is a Gentleman, whose information you may rely on, at least from the acquaintance I have had with him. I have confidence in him myself. North Carolina is so near Virginia, where will be your best market, that tho' you send there, the Letter forwarded to Mess<sup>rs</sup> King & C<sup>o</sup> will answer your Purpose. I would advise you to send over samples or patterns of all the Cloths of your Manufactory, with the width & the Prices, by which means you may at once know what goods will best suit the Country with greater certainty than in any other way. Please to inform me when you send away the Gent<sup>l</sup>, as I wish to write one or two Letters, &c. I am, &c.,

SILAS DEANE.

M<sup>r</sup> T. Martin.*Thomas Mss.*

TO WILLIAM MCCREERY.

Paris, 1<sup>st</sup> Nov<sup>r</sup>, 1777.

DEAR SIR,—I have time to write One Word. M<sup>r</sup> Chaumont declines doing any thing with the Notes on any Discount, & says he will return them on your sending his Receipt. I expect a Friend of mine here in the Course of this week, from Amsterdam, who is the most likely to do something with them of any man I know of in the World. I have a Brother who will come with him, who has been trying to do something of the kind in Amsterdam; when they arrive will propose it to them; meantime will follow the Orders you may give. I am, &c.,

SILAS DEANE.

W<sup>m</sup> McCreary, Esq.*Thomas Mss.*



TO MESSRS. DELAP.

Paris, Nov<sup>r</sup> 1<sup>st</sup>, 1777.

DEAR SIR,—I wrote you the 11<sup>th</sup> & 14<sup>th</sup> ult<sup>o</sup>, to which have not received any Answer. This serves to Cover a Letter for a Brother of mine, which I wish you to send by the first Vessel going for America. It is of some importance, & I send Duplicates to different ports. We are still without News to be relied on from America. The last is from Portsmouth, y<sup>e</sup> 4<sup>th</sup> of Sep<sup>t</sup>, but the Cap<sup>t</sup> having obliged to destroy his Letters on his Passage, We have no Particulars. The general Report when he left the Country was that Burgoyne was defeated with a Considerable Loss. It is certain that Howe could not have begun to act before the first of Sep<sup>t</sup> any where, so that I am in hopes he will not be able to effect any thing more than shifting his Position, as he calls it, & it is probable that New York or Halifax will be his Winter Quarters. I begin to fear that you have not received my two last. Please to inform me per Return of the Courier. I have sometime since promised a Journey your way, & am in hopes of performing it in the Course of this Month. I am, &c.,

SILAS DEANE.

Mess<sup>rs</sup>. Delaps.*Thomas Mss.*

TO BARNABAS DEANE.

Paris, Nov<sup>r</sup> 1<sup>st</sup>, 1777.

DEAR BROTHER,—You will undoubtedly before this had the News of our Brother's safe arrival in France. He is now at Amsterdam, where he went, well recommended, & will have a good Opportunity of forming valuable Acquaintance both with men & things. I expect him back in a few Days, after which he will lose no time in returning to Virginia, where he will fix, & I think with a good prospect; but as his return is liable to accidents, I wish you could be at Peters-

burgh in Virginia by the middle of Feb.y. next, & for these Reasons, viz., he will send & carry out in Packet ships, with a good house here, about Eight or Ten Thousand pounds in Goods, which are now ready for shipping. He will have many valuable consignments from France & Commissions for purchasing American produce, which he will arrange in such a manner that should an Accident happen to him you may represent him, & the object is worth your attention, indeed it is sufficiently extensive & large to employ several to good account, & if prosecuted as planned, it may be worth your closing any thing where you are & fixing somewhere in Virginia; but Brother Simeon will on his Return write you more particularly, & I shall do the same; meantime I shall send you Duplicates of this & order one or more of them to the Care of Mess<sup>rs</sup> J. King & C<sup>o</sup> at Petersburg, the house on which Our Brother valued himself when there, & with whom he Corresponds. One of the Partners was lately in Paris & is now on his return. I will only pray you to make my Compliments to all Friends, & assure yourself that neither Time nor Place will ever alter the sincere affection I have for you. Adieu.

SILAS DEANE.

B. Deane, Esq<sup>r</sup>

*Thomas Mss.*

TO JOHN KING & CO.

Paris, 1<sup>st</sup> Nov<sup>r</sup>, 1777.

GENTLEMEN,—M<sup>rs</sup> Jauge & C<sup>o</sup>, a Capital House at Bourdeaux, are engaging in the American Commerce, & I have recommended them to address their Vessels to your House at Petersburg. Your good Partner was lately here & I hope will be safely arrived before the receipt of this. My Brother will leave France in the course of the Ensuing month & designs for Virginia directly. I am confident you will exert yourselves to



render Mess<sup>rs</sup>. Jauge & C<sup>o</sup> every facility for disposing of their Cargoes to the best advantage.

I am, &c.,

SILAS DEANE.

Mess<sup>rs</sup>. John King & C<sup>o</sup>

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO JONATHAN WILLIAMS.

Paris, Nov<sup>r</sup> 8<sup>th</sup>, 1777.

DEAR SIR,—I wrote you by Peltier, & somewhat in haste, since which yours of the 4<sup>th</sup> is arrived. I am sorry that any thing should be put in to the Lyon as ballast that will not be useful in America. Pray purchase salt or Flints or Lead, or some thing for the purpose that is wanted in America; as to the Funds, we must continue to supply them. I pray that she may be equipped as soon as possible, & also the Dolphin, which may carry some of the articles & sail under the Convoy of the Lyon. The Mercury & Marquis de Chayllote can take all and more than what you will have left, & I presume you will not find difficulty in agreeing for the freight per Tonn. M<sup>r</sup>. Montieu proposed 120 Liv<sup>s</sup> per Tonn out. I think he will abate a little, but I had rather give that sum than not have the goods sent in them. Those two ships, the Lyon & one or two more of equal Force, ready to go at the same time, may resist any single ship here or on the Coast of America. The Cloths are of the first & capital importance, & therefore must at all Events be dispatched. With respect to the Cloths furnished by Montieu, if they will not compare with the Patterns given they cannot be taken on the terms agreed for; and as to those which you find absolutely too small, they cannot be sent on any terms on our account. Indeed I apprehend you will meet with difficulty. I know not how it can be adjusted better, considering the necessity there is for all the Supplies possible, than for Montieu to ship them on his own account. I have not spoke particularly with him, as he

is sick, & as from yours, it does not appear that you had finished the examination of them. M<sup>r</sup> Ross will go for Nantes next week, & by him shall forward the particular instructions for Capt. Nicholson, &c. My Brother is returned, & will take the brig, which I desire may be loaded with Salt, as no other article of any Consequence will be sent in her. I have not seen Ross since the receipt of yours. I am sorry that Williams, as well as we, should be disappointed by this misunderstanding, but hope you will be able to procure another person equally able to conduct the Brig, & that she may go with Capt. Nicholson & the others, & I shall send down the orders for the Capt., leaving a blank for his name, which you will fill up properly. As to the making any more Cloths in France, nothing can as yet be determined. My private opinion, however, is that it is better to send out the Cloth in Bales. I have no patience with Mercier, & wish heartily we were rid of a fellow who appears to be a perfect trifler, & therefore desire he may be held close to his agreement or be wholly off.

I am, &c.,

SILAS DEANE.

M<sup>r</sup> J. Williams.

P.S. Respecting the Dolphin, I wish she may be the last that you do any thing with as to the Loading, as I have since my last, by Peltier, had some thoughts of sending her another way. You may have her ready to take in, & you know she may be loaded in a few hours. Early next week I will write you my final determination.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO CAPT. JOHN YOUNG.

Paris, 8<sup>th</sup> Nov<sup>r</sup> 1777.

SIR,—By yours of the 3<sup>d</sup> I learn you will be ready soon for sea; what is necessary to be sent you from hence will be forwarded in the course of next week. I



hope you will be ready to set out immediately after the receipt thereof, & I shall write more particularly by the same Conveyance.

I am, &c.,

SILAS DEANE.

Capt. Young.

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO JONATHAN WILLIAMS.

Paris, 8<sup>th</sup> Nov<sup>r</sup>, 1777.

DEAR SIR,—The Bearer, M<sup>r</sup> Bennet, is a native of Philadelphia, & wants to return thither. I have, therefore, directed him to you to be shipped either in Nicholson or any other vessel going out; he may be useful in any capacity, as he speaks several Languages & is accustomed to the sea.

I am, &c.,

SILAS DEANE.

M<sup>r</sup> Williams.

*Thomas Mss.*

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WILLIAM LEE TO FRANCIS LIGHTFOOT LEE.

Paris, 11<sup>th</sup> Nov., 1777.

MY DEAR BROTHER,—I wrote you many Letters from Nantes in Aug<sup>t</sup>, Sept., & Oct. last, which I hope will get safe. Before I left London the beginning of June, I arranged all my former mercantile transactions in the only way that the situation of things cou'd possibly admit, & in May forwarded to you a copy of my Accounts proved with duplicate Acc<sup>t</sup> Sales, & Acc<sup>ts</sup> Cur<sup>t</sup> for all my correspondents, & explaining, as fully as it was possible for me to do, what was my Idea of the mode to be pursued in settling those affairs. The whole was inclosed to you, & y<sup>r</sup> packet put under cover to Col. Taylor. I shall be very impatient to hear of these things getting safe to your hands, & beg you will write me frequently & by various opportunities whether you have or have not received them. I send you now an

Invoice of the few things I bo't at Nantes for you & Our Br<sup>r</sup> R. H. Lee, which were put on board the S<sup>t</sup> Tamminy, Cap<sup>t</sup> Rob<sup>t</sup> Barron, who is a native of Hampton in Virginia, but you may always hear of him by writeing to Col. John Tabb, near or at Petersburg, on Appomattox. Our Nephew Tho<sup>s</sup> Lee was to take a Bill of Loading, & wrote you as well as his father ab<sup>t</sup> them by Cap<sup>t</sup> Barron, who was not ready to take in goods when I left Nantes. You will stand indebted for Two hundred & seventy three Livres, five Sols, for y<sup>r</sup> part, & R. H. Lee with Three hundred & eighty eight Livres, fifteen Sols for his part, as the Invoice will shew. The linens are marked as intended for each, therefore there will be no mistake. I cou'd not get them insured.

You have also a minute of some things that have been forwarded for the Public Use ; it may be well to enquire about them. Nothing is expected in return, except for One Million of Livres that were borrowed on a very injudicious & looseing contract for Tob<sup>o</sup>, which was made without the least knowledge of the nature of the affair ; nor do I know that the contractors had any authority for doing what they did ; however, as luckily the time limited will expire before they can possibly comply with their engagement, in my thinking the money borrowed with interest sh<sup>d</sup> only be return'd to the lenders. I wish you may find that this and the other money has been more judiciously expended than it has been borrowed. With respect to myself, I know not by what means my line of business has been changed ; most certainly the honour is increased, but the profit is greatly lessened with this difficulty, labour & hazard greatly enlarged. In the First Line I cou'd & assuredly shou'd have been of great [use] unto the Public, as well as myself ; especially if the Secret Committee wou'd support their own Authority & show an insolent medler here that they w<sup>d</sup> properly notice his presumption in taking on himself in many instances to contravene their appointment & orders. In the present Line I doubt my abilities, for however anxious & zealous, it



must require both much time & more Capacity than is common for a man not versed in the crooked paths of Courts to get into the mysteries of the most subtle Cabinets of Europe ; besides, above 40 years old, it is somewhat awkward to go to school to learn languages. All this, however, must be essayed, & as soon as I find I will be agreeable to the Concern'd I shall set out on my mission. I hope, however, it will be considered that leaving a Family, it will be both very inconvenient & expensive to move when once fix'd. My plan is to move to the Northward as soon as I find my presence will be acceptable, leaving M<sup>rs</sup> L. & her two little ones here for the winter ; by the spring I may be able to judge whether 'tis best to fix at Vienna or Berlin, when she & the children must follow. If nothing very material can be effected in Austria or Prussia, ought not the Commissioner to be station'd in Holland ? for tho' the Dutch w<sup>d</sup> not receive one openly, yet 'tis possible that under the rose a loan of money might be negotiated, much better than by the Com<sup>rs</sup> here. Whether your Affairs on this side have been as well conducted as they might have been, you perhaps can judge as well as me ; but I may venture to assert they will not be better until there is a clear line drawn & settled, & the Commissioners are strictly restrain'd to the political part, leaving mercantile business to the Commercial Agent as long as it is tho't proper to keep one.

I have before mentioned a M<sup>r</sup> Carmichael to you, who is here. He is a native of Maryland, tho' of Scotch pedigree, & I believe a distant relation somehow or other of Col. LLoyd ; at least he gives it out so. I have had occasion to see & know a great deal of mankind, & of all Men I ever knew, I have the worst opinion of this man, & I beg you will strenuously oppose any thing that may be proposed, which may occasion any intercourse whatever between me & him, for I cannot trust him in the most distant manner, nor shall any consideration induce me to hold any correspondence or connection with him.

I wish it was in my power to say anything decisive, relative to the general disposition of affairs in your favour ; I know not what they are writeing, whose particular duty it is to inform you truely of the disposition of Europe. In my opinion you ought principally to depend on yourselves, &, at all events, make every possible preparation for another Campaign. We have heard of Burgoyne's drubings by Arnold to the 20<sup>th</sup> of Sept., but sh<sup>d</sup> B. & his whole Army to a man be cut off, & Howe be able to get into Philadelphia, it will be sufficient for a mad King & a Wicked Ministry to try another Campaign.

Make all the friends you can in Europe, but trust none of them more than needs must, for all that has or will be done, will proceed more from Enmity to G. B. than Love for you or the Glorious Cause in which you are contend'g.

There was an affair which happened at Nantes that has given me a great deal of uneasiness. I will state it fully that you may be master of the business, since I apprehend it will, or ought to be, the subject of public consideration, & request you will not lose a moment in communicateing to R. H. L. exactly what I say, as my time will not permit me to enlarge so much on it to him. On the 20<sup>th</sup> of Aug<sup>t</sup>, 2 New England Privateers, commanded by Cap<sup>ts</sup> Babson & Kendrick, bro't into Nantes 2 British West India Ships with valueable Cargoes, as prizes. Before I saw them, they had got with an Irish Tory at Nantes, to whom they communicated every thing they had done, & fully informed him of their whole situation ; they had besides, in many other respects, conducted themselves very imprudently. As soon as I got the sight of them, I gave them the best advice I was capable of giving. Afterwards they put the sale of the prizes into the hands of M<sup>r</sup> Penet, a partner of M<sup>r</sup> Pliarne, whom you have seen, M<sup>r</sup> Jonathan Williams, a Nephew of Doctor Franklin's, & myself.

As I had seen enough of the conduct of these people to



make me doubtful of their prudence or discretion, I took no part of the conduct of the business on myself, farther than to advise M<sup>r</sup> Williams, who, being a Countryman of the two New England Captains, I tho't w<sup>d</sup> please them best. However, unfortunately, no part of my advice was carried into execution, for the business was carried on in so open a manner, & the Cap<sup>ts</sup>, with their people, acted so imprudently, that before the Vessels & Cargoes were sold the English Ministry knew every circumstance relative to them, & on mak'g. application to the French Court, the whole was seized, & has since, by order of the French Minister, been return'd to the former British Owners. It must not be forgot that just at the time of these prizes coming in, we heard at Nantes of a M<sup>r</sup> Hodge, of Philadelphia, being put into the — Bastile on account of some irregular conduct in fitting out a Privateer at Dunkirk, commanded by Cap<sup>t</sup> Coningham, on private Account, tho' it is hinted now that the expence of this outfit is to be placed to the Publick Account, for the scheme has not proved a profitable one. This intelligence made me apprehensive, & I instantly wrote a particular account of the privateers & their prizes to the Commissioners at Paris, desiring their advice how we ought to proceed. From the date of my Letter to the time of the prizes being seized 10 days elapsed without their giving any answer or taking the least notice of my letter, nor do I find since that they have made the least application on the subject to the French Ministry, tho' M<sup>r</sup> Williams came up from Nantes on purpose to engage them to do so. Indeed, a private French Gentleman undertook the business for M<sup>r</sup> Williams, but as yet with very little effect. This procedure will appear very extraordinary when contrasted with the following circumstance mention'd to me in a Letter from Spain rec<sup>d</sup> this day, where neither D<sup>r</sup> F. or M<sup>r</sup> D. have acted as Commissioners. Extract of the Letter : " A prize sent into S<sup>t</sup> Sebastiane, the Governor tho't fitting to stop & to prohibit the sale of the Cargoe, the Ship & Cargo was sold to a French Merchant, who

immediately applied to the Spanish Ministry ; orders came by the return Courier to the Governor to take off the Arrest, with orders not to intermeddle in future in those matters ; the ship & Cargoe was immediately delivered up to the purchaser." Thus you have a full & fair account of this business, which has given me infinite vexation in every stage of it, because I am greatly apprehensive it may be productive of much mischief to the general interest of America. From the unsettled state of things with you, I can easily conceive that many irregularities wou'd easily arise, but I live in hopes of seeing order grow from confusion & that in a little time every man will be kept to his proper business, & be made to account regularly for every part of his Conduct. With respect to my conduct relative to the prizes, I will refer at any time to the testimony of W<sup>m</sup> Blake, Esq<sup>r</sup>, a Gentleman of one of the first fortunes and Families in S<sup>c</sup> Carolina, who was at Nantes the whole time & acquainted with the whole transaction. I still think, however, that the French Court will indemnify the American Captors, in Meal or in Malt, for the loss of these prizes.\*

Things are not yet ripe for their plans, & a little temporiseing to hoodwink the already blinded English might be political & wise. You have a Copy of a Letter from Mons<sup>r</sup> De Sartine, which I before sent to R. H. L. ; by that you'll see they begin to open their plans. I know you are not over fond of much business, but still it is incumbent on you to get some more active person to call immediately for an account of the expenditure of the several Millions of Livres which the Commissioners (at least the acting one of them in those affairs) have received in this Country for the public use. Such an account in my opinion, it is absolutely necessary shou'd be immediately furnish'd to you, otherwise you may, when 'tis too late, repent the delay. Shou'd there be an Idea of continueing the appointment of a

\* The King of France, after the Alliance, reimbursed the American owners through Holker, French Consul at Philadelphia.



Commercial superintending Agent, you will render the public an essential Service, in my opinion, in forwarding the appointment of M<sup>r</sup> John LLOYD, of South Carolina, who is now settled at Nantes. He is an experienced, intelligent Merch<sup>t</sup>, & of fair Character. M<sup>r</sup> Lawrens of S<sup>c</sup> Carolina knows him well. Care sh<sup>d</sup> be taken this Winter to fortify Ch<sup>s</sup> Town ag<sup>t</sup> any attack in that quarter, for you will see by the King of G. B. speech, inclosed to R. H. L., that another Campaign is determin'd on (Nov. 24). Write me as op<sup>ty</sup>s offer, under cover to M<sup>r</sup> John Bondfield, L'Academie, Bourdeaux ; M<sup>r</sup> I. D. Schweighauser, Negociant, Nantes ; M<sup>r</sup> And<sup>w</sup> Limozin, Negociant, Havre de Grass ; Mess<sup>rs</sup> Gamba & Archdeacon, Negociants, Dunkirk ; Mess<sup>rs</sup> Blondel & fils, Negociants, Rotterdam ; Mess. Larwood, Vanhazelt & C<sup>o</sup>, Negociants, Amsterdam ; & M<sup>r</sup> Parish, Negociant, Hamburgh. Give these directions to R. H. L. & any friends that you think proper ; at the same time it may be of publick Service if it was generally known that American Vessels arriving at any of the Northern ports in Europe, & wanting any advice or assistance by writeing to any of the Mention'd Merch<sup>ts</sup> that are nearest to them, may always know where to direct to me. You must salute our dear Sister, & tell her she must answer for the good behaviour of our daughter Portia, just now 6 Months old, for that charge is given to her & our Neice Hannah of Chantilly.

Heaven bless & protect you all, & believe us most truely & sincerely, Your Affec<sup>t</sup>, &c., &c.,

W. LEE.

*Lee Papers, Harvard University.*

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TO MESSRS. BERRARD, FRERES, GOULARD AND  
MENSLAISSE.

Paris, 12<sup>th</sup> Nov., 1777.

GENTLEMEN,—Yours of the 13<sup>th</sup> was duly received, in answer to which I have to advise you to sell the

Rice if it will amount to Twenty-two livres the C<sup>t</sup> or Quintal, & the Indigo if it will go at Six livres & one-half or Seven the Pound; but if the Price is not so high at present that you will put the Cargo into Store & give Notice of the Sale of it some Day about the middle of next Month, by which time may be had to try the Market. I am induced to this, as M<sup>r</sup> Chaumont informs me that there will not be any Charge for Storage of the Goods, which, I am of the opinion, are more likely to rise than to fall in the Price. It is necessary that the Ship should be discharged as soon as may be, as the Owner has employ for her, & she has already been detained beyond the time expected. The Avails of this Cargo you will hold at our disposal, & you will inform us of your Proceedings either in the Sales or otherways, and depend on hearing from us on the subject as circumstances may occur In what direction the money will be wanted. We are obliged to you for the Measures you mention to have taken in regard to this Vessel, & for the seasonable Notice given of her Arrival. I have the honor to remain, in behalf of the Commissioners, with much Esteem, Gent<sup>l</sup>,

Yours, &c.,

SILAS DEANE.

The Commissioners conclude the sale of this Vessel will be conducted by the same Gentlemen as have before acted for them.

To Mess<sup>rs</sup> Berrard, Freres & C<sup>o</sup>, M<sup>r</sup> Goulard & Menslaisier [Monplaisir?]

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO GEN. BENEDICT ARNOLD.

Paris, 12<sup>th</sup> Nov<sup>r</sup>, 1777.

DEAR SIR,—I have taken the Liberty of introducing the Bearer, Mons. ———, to your acquaintance. He is a Gentleman of Family, & his desire of seeing



America has induced him to make the Voyage. I have informed [him] that there was no prospect of employ at Present in the American Army from the Numbers already gone, as well as from the great Number of Americans justly entitled to the preference, & he proposes, if the service is agreeable, to make his Campaign as a Volunteer, & hopes by his merit to recommend himself to the Good Opinion of the Officers & Army in the American Service.

I have the honor to be, &c.,

SILAS DEANE.

Gen<sup>l</sup> Arnold.

A Letter of the same date and purpose to M<sup>r</sup> B. Deane.

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*Thomas Mss.*

TO JOHN P. MERCKLÉ.

Paris, 14<sup>th</sup> Nov<sup>r</sup>, 1777.

DEAR SIR,—I should have replied earlier to yours of the 23<sup>d</sup> ult<sup>o</sup>, but have been in daily expectation of seeing Sir G. Grand in this City. He is not yet arrived, & consequently I cannot say any thing as to the Arms of the inferior Quality. The moment he arrives will know of him what his Opinion of them is, & give Orders accordingly. With respect to the others, I conclude the affair is settled, & that you will have received your money for them before this. I have at no Time been insensible to your Distresses, nor backward in doing all in my power to relieve you, but you know in part how we have been situated, having never been privy to the Contract nor supplied with Funds to do any thing in the affair. The Commerce of America, having in a manner been wholly intercepted, has occasioned the Difficulties in your proceedings, nor have you been the only sufferer; the Congress as well as Individuals have suffered much in Consequence. I shall write you again

the first post after the Arrival of Sir G. Grand ; meantime remain, with due Esteem,

Sir, yours, &c.,

SILAS DEANE.

Mr. Merkle.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO JONATHAN WILLIAMS.

Paris, Nov. 15<sup>th</sup>, 1777.

DEAR SIR,—I have only one moment to write you pr this Post. M<sup>r</sup> Chaumont writes M<sup>r</sup> Peltier, which he will communicate to you. It is really surprizing how I should be so misunderstood by M<sup>r</sup> Peltier, but my Letter pr M<sup>r</sup> Ross shall explain it; meantime I think, with M<sup>r</sup> Chaumont, that the Lyon should be sold, & then I hope no objection will be made to her being equipp'd as French Property.

But I will also write you more particularly on this Subject by M<sup>r</sup> Ross, who goes off tomorrow morning. Meantime I am, Dear Sir, &c.,

SILAS DEANE.

M<sup>r</sup> Williams.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO JONATHAN WILLIAMS.

Paris, Nov<sup>r</sup> 15<sup>th</sup>, 1777.

DEAR SIR,—Yours by Capt. Nicholson are before us. M<sup>r</sup> Deane's Letters of yesterday proposed passing a sale of the Lyon & sending her out as French Property; that is, that he go down the River as commanded by the French Captain, and that Captain Nicholson, instead of returning to Nantes, go directly to meet her at the mouth of the River & take the command. Of the possibility as well as practicability of such a measure you are the best judge. As to the freight on M<sup>r</sup> Montieu's ship, we have no objection to the price of 120 Livres pr Ton, payable in Tobacco at the Current price, or payable in Europe on the return of the Vessel; but M<sup>r</sup> Pel-



tier was mistaken in supposing that the Prices of the Tobacco could be ascertained here, and still more so in supposing that it could be fixed at 30 Livres pr quintal. As to the Destination, Boston & other Eastern Ports were mentioned on account of their being most likely to be free from English Cruisers. M<sup>r</sup> Peltier's objections have weight with them on account of the returns, but it will not answer on any Terms to have the Vessels go South of Virginia; the Ports of North Carolina will not admit them. If, therefore, M<sup>r</sup> Peltier will agree for Virginia, that objection will be obviated; but we conceive that it would be better, if possible, to have more certain intelligence of the Operations of Gen<sup>l</sup> Howe before the final orders are given. This cannot detain us many Days, probably not beyond the next Post from England, immediately after which we will write you further. But if M<sup>r</sup> Peltier is wholly off freighting on any Terms, you must endeavour to take up a proper Vessel for the goods, on the best Terms you can. M<sup>r</sup> Ross has a vessel for sale at L'Orient, but cannot learn as to her burthen or state; he will be able to inform you soon after his arrival at Nantes. You can, if necessary, make the Sale of the Lyon to M<sup>r</sup> Chaumont, who we prefer in this affair, and let the expedition go on in his name, as you proposed in yours, which indeed appears to be the only probable method left us. As to the Cutter, you appear at this instant to have use for her at Nantes; our final determination as to her may therefore be deferred a few days. Your opinion respecting her is undoubtedly just; please to inform us what quantity of goods she will carry if fitted out as a packet, & what number of seamen will be necessary for her. We shall write you as we find the situation of things here, and are, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

SILAS DEANE.

P. S. We say 110 Livres, but if it cannot be had for that, you may give 120, if no vessel can be had for Less; if Mr. Peltier insist on his Vessels going to Virginia, the

Lyon, it is probable, cannot accompany them the whole Voyage ; at least we cannot at present engage farther than off the Coast of Europe, as we must prefer sending the Lyon Northward, unless the situation of affairs in America should appear to alter before her going out.  
M<sup>r</sup> Williams.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO JONATHAN WILLIAMS.

Paris, 15<sup>th</sup> Nov<sup>r</sup>, 1777.

DEAR SIR,—Yours of the 11<sup>th</sup> is before me, also M<sup>r</sup> Peltier's of the same date ; the Letter from the Commissioners & yours I wrote on the Expedition of the Brigantine, will in general answer them. I am not a little vexed to find M<sup>r</sup> Peltier should think me Capable of saying one thing to M<sup>r</sup> Montieu & of writing another to Nantes. It must have been in Consequence of my being misunderstood in a Language which I speak but indifferently ; my Letter to you gave my general Idea of the best plan of getting to America in the safest manner, rather than the fixing determinately the Destination of the Ships. At the same time, if the Ships can be freighted to go directly for New England, it is my Opinion they should be preferr'd, as I am still of Opinion that the Ports to the Eastward will be the safest ; the uncertain state we are in is as distressing as the weak & inconstant measures pursued by those with whom we are Concerned. I wish you would make a Tryal [what] is the most can be obtained for the Dolphin without putting her absolutely to sale ; this will be our guide in determining with regard to her. M<sup>r</sup> Chaumont is doing every thing that can be done in the affairs of the Prizes. I feel as much as you or any other man can on this occasion.

I am &c., yours,

SILAS DEANE.

Jn<sup>o</sup> Williams, Esq<sup>r</sup>

*Thomas Mss.*



TO JONATHAN WILLIAMS.

Paris, 16<sup>th</sup> Nov., 1777.

DEAR SIR,—I have seen M<sup>r</sup> Montieu since my last, & the following are the Articles on which we agreed, Copy of which he promised to write M<sup>r</sup> Peltier, viz<sup>t</sup> :

“M<sup>r</sup> Williams shall have Liberty to Ship the Goods he wants to send to America either upon the Challotte or Mercury.

“Three Vessels shall sail in Company with the Frigate (meaning the Lyon), & shall go for Portsmouth, Boston, or Virginia. The freight shall be at One hundred twenty livres pr Ton, payable in France as soon as News shall be received of the Arrival & delivery of the Goods.

“The Vessels to be armed & equipped & every necessary at the expense of M<sup>r</sup> Montieu. N. B. The Vessels mount one 22 Cannon Sixpounders, the other 20 four Pounders, and manned in Proportion.”

This obviates any dispute as to the payment of the freight in Tobacco, & at the same time as to the Destination of the Vessels ; if the Marquis Challotair is the best Sailor you can prefer her in the disposition of the Goods.

I think the freight is rather high ; it is, however, lower than what has in general been offered. The Vessels are armed & loaded with Military Stores, which are Circumstances that ought to influence the Price, and as our former authorized you to go to that Sum, & Montieu actually refusing to take less, I closed it, & mention these Particulars that the present may not be consider'd as precedent in Cases different. As to the Frigate & the particular Orders, I hope we shall be able to determine on both in a few Days, As it is impossible we can rest much longer in this state of uncertainty.

I am, with much Esteem, &c.,

SILAS DEANE.

M<sup>r</sup> Williams.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO JONATHAN WILLIAMS.

Paris, Nov<sup>r</sup> 19<sup>th</sup>, 1777.

DEAR SIR,—The Commissioners are of opinion that it will be best to make sale of the Dolphin; you will, therefore, put her up for sale & obtain the best price you can for her. I have wrote M<sup>r</sup> Ross on the subject, as he mentioned his having an inclination to purchase her; should he insist on taking her, am content, but if he has altered his mind, & the Vessel should not go higher than 10,000 Livres, buy her for my Brother, who wants such a Vessel to go out to America in. We are still without any certainty how affairs are going in America, which induces my Brother not to venture out immediately; he will write you this post about the Brig, &c. Yours of the 15<sup>th</sup> to D<sup>r</sup> Franklin was shewn me, & that to me of the same date is before me, on which subject I will write you at large in a day or two; but in general you are sensible how difficult it is to raise any sum of consequence, as well as of the numerous demands on our small, precarious stock. Nor are these all the difficulties which present themselves on every such proposal when money is to be called for. As to your proposal of establishing yourself at L'Orient, I will write you freely my sentiments, as well as my situation, in my next, mean while desire you will converse with M<sup>r</sup> Ross on proposals w<sup>h</sup> he made when at Paris to M<sup>r</sup> Moylan, who has been also spoke to by M<sup>r</sup> W. Lee on the same subject, & who, for the first time, spoke to me of it a few hours before I received yours. I shall ever think myself happy in promoting your views for an advantageous establishment; your present ought to be such, though I know it is not so to you personally, and that in your present Circumstances you can, after having done much service to your Country, have little more than the satisfaction arising from the consciousness of your services and of being suspected, if not abused, by certain bystanders. I know enough of this, by too much experience, not to wish one for whom I have so high



an Esteem and Friendship in a different situation, but more of this hereafter. I have advised my Brother to obtain, if possible, on any reasonable Terms, insurance on the Brig before she sails.

I am, &c.,

SILAS DEANE.

P. S. M<sup>r</sup> Hodge will probably be here tomorrow from Dunkirk & at Nantes the next week.

M<sup>r</sup> Williams.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO JOHN ROSS.

Paris, 19<sup>th</sup> Nov<sup>r</sup>, 1777.

DEAR SIR,—M<sup>r</sup> Hodge went for Dunkirk on Saturday; he will return, I expect, tomorrow. The Little Vessel in which Capt. Cunningham formerly sailed is by M<sup>r</sup> Chaumont ordered round to L'Orient. I mention this, as she may probably answer for M<sup>r</sup> Hodge to take a passage in, if no objections are made to his going in her, which I am apprehensive of, & that the objections will Lye equally against the Dolphin, on account of their having been formerly employed in a Cruize, & on M<sup>r</sup> Hodge's account, on whose motions our Enemies have a jealous Eye; consequently his taking a passage in either of them, however innocent his attentions may be, will unavoidably, if observed & complained of, occasion difficulties of which you ought to be apprized. Both the Dolphin & Luggar were long since prohibited going out as American property, unless to America or some foreign Port. The Commissioners have ordered the Dolphin to be sold, & it is indifferent to them who purchases her. If you think she will suit you either to send to America or any foreign port on any business, except that of Cruizing against the English, advise you to purchase her, otherwise not. But I will discourse with M<sup>r</sup> Hodge on his return, and write you the result, as well as what he may do at Dunkirk. I saw M<sup>r</sup> Moy-

lan last Evening, and since received a Letter from M<sup>r</sup> Williams, informing that M<sup>r</sup> Gourlade had applied to him on the same subject. I have replied to M<sup>r</sup> Williams that M<sup>r</sup> Moylan had been spoken to by you when here, & by M<sup>r</sup> W. Lee since, on the subject. It is indifferent to me personally, but shall be sorry for any interference, real or apparent.

I am, &c.,

SILAS DEANE.

M<sup>r</sup> J<sup>n</sup>° Ross.

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO JONATHAN WILLIAMS.

Paris, Nov. 20<sup>th</sup>, 1777.

DEAR SIR,—This will be deliver'd you by Capt<sup>t</sup> Fogg, late a prisoner in England. If you have not provided a Cap for the Brig, you may appoint him on the same terms as you have offer'd to others; but if you are already supplied, wish you may find some Gentleman sending to America who may want a Cap<sup>t</sup>, as I've much Confidence in Capt. Fogg, as a sober, Honest, steady Man, & a good Seaman. A young Sailor comes in Company with him, who has met with a misfortune, & wants to return to America, to his Friends, where he has some little Property, but he is not of age. I wish you to procure him a berth as a Cook or some such service, in which he can earn his passage, which I think him capable of doing. If he wants necessities, Charity requires he should have them; but our, as well as his, Circumstances call for all the Oeconomy possible. I am sorry to hear of the conduct of Abbot & Dana. I am told they boast of having received favours which they are not willing to consider themselves accountable for, but refuse to serve in the ships of their Country. As to Chandler, who has wrote us a long Letter, I can find no employ for him, nor do I know for what employ he is fit.

The Commissioners may possibly answer him jointly,



but I think his Conduct very extraordinary, after being relieved here, & again at the Port to which he was sent to embark, to find him refusing to go to St Maloes, going to Nantes & then calling on us for employ & Supplies. He ought to find his Passage back in the best manner he can to his Friends, for it is impossible for us to provide for him. I shall write you again, by tomorrow's Post. Meantime am, with sincere Esteem, &c.,

SILAS DEANE.

To Jon. Williams, Esq<sup>r</sup>

*Thomas Mss.*

TO MESSRS. DELAP.

Paris, Nov<sup>r</sup> 21<sup>st</sup>, 1777.

GENTLEMEN,—We are informed that the ship Portsmouth, which left Bourdeaux a few days since, made Prize of a Vessel from Cork, entering the River, with a Pilot on board, & after she had got into the Passage of Grave. This is the Captain's Story, on which his complaint is founded. We ask you to enquire into the particulars of this Transaction, and send us the Pilot's Account of it attested. Several American Vessels have been taken in the Course of the last Season, by the English, near the Coasts of France, & one or more, as we have been informed, in near the same Circumstances. You will oblige us by enquiring how near the Land American Ships have been taken, bound to your Port, & sending us the Account. We are, with much Esteem, &c.,

B. FRANKLIN,  
SILAS DEANE.

The Pilot's Name is Doussier, of Royan. A Copy of the Declaration made at the Admiralty is wanted, if it can be obtained.  
Messrs. Delap.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO JONATHAN WILLIAMS.

Paris, Nov<sup>r</sup> 21<sup>st</sup>, 1777.

DEAR SIR,—You are desired to get from Cap<sup>t</sup> Adams a particular Account of his being taken, in which he must ascertain, as exact as is in his Power, at what distance he was from the Coast of France when he was first Chased, and when he was actually taken. He must make oath to his narration, and send it up to us by the first Courier. If you have knowledge of other Vessels taken by English Ships of War near the Coast of France, I wish you to enquire into the particulars of their Capture, & at what distance it may have happened, & send up the Account to the Commissioners. I am, &c.,

SILAS DEANE.

Mr. Williams.

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*Thomas Mss.*

TO JOHN P. MERCKLÉ.

Paris 23<sup>d</sup> Nov<sup>r</sup>, 1777.

DEAR SIR,—Since my last Sir G. Grand has arrived, & on consulting with him the Commissioners are of opinion that they can go no farther than to compleat the agreement made between you & him when my Brother was at Amsterdam. This I conclude has been by this time executed. It is unnecessary to repeat what I have before said and wrote to you on this subject, as you are fully sensible that for every Article which the Commissioners account to you for, they become accountable in the same manner as if they purchased them of any other Person, as they were never privy to your Contract nor authorized to meddle in it in the least. Whatever disappointments you have met with in the Execution are to be placed to the Account of the unforeseen & inevitable Events of War, from which, tho' it has ever been the Wish, it



has never been in the Power of the Commissioners to relieve you entirely.

I am, &c.,  
SILAS DEANE.

Mr. Mercklé.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO MESSRS. ROSQUELLE AND ELSTIRIER.

Paris, Nov<sup>r</sup> 23<sup>d</sup>, 1777.

GENTLEMEN,—Yours of the 18<sup>th</sup>, under Cover of Mess<sup>rs</sup> T. & A. Dubbledemots, we received. Are obliged to you for your offers of Correspondence & for Account of the Price of sundry Articles of American Produce at your Port. Please to inform us of the Indigo you mention at 50 to 70 Stuyvers pr lb. is Carolina growth or other, & what the Difference, if any, between that & other Indigo.

We are not ourselves concerned in Commerce, but at the same time am desirous of giving our Countrymen the best intelligence that can be obtained on a subject of so much importance to them, & doubt not but a Trade between them & your Port may be carried on to great & mutual Advantage.

We are, &c.,  
B. FRANKLIN,  
SILAS DEANE.

Mess<sup>rs</sup> J. Rosquelles, A. Elstirier  
& P. H. L. Rosquelle.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO MESSRS. DUBBLEDEMOTS.

Paris, Nov<sup>r</sup> 23<sup>d</sup>, 1777.

GENTLEMEN,—We received yours of the 18<sup>th</sup> & observe the Contents. We shall this Week transmit to America the Papers relative to your Vessel taken, & write on the Subject, as we proposed in our last Letter. At the same time, as there is danger of the

Packets being intercepted, it will be proper for you to send Duplicates to your Correspondent in St Eustetia, from whence they may be sent to the Continent ; by which you will be more certain of having the affair justly represented and in proper Time. We are obliged to you for the kindness shewn our Countrymen in Distress, but as more of them may arrive under the same Circumstances, & a Journey to Paris is very expensive & can be of no Service, we desire they may be sent directly to America if any Vessel is going, in a manner the least Expensive or otherwise, to Nantes by Water, where they will be able to find Passages by applying to Mr Jonathan Williams.

We are sensible they may on various pretensions urge you to send them forward to Paris. But as we are Confident it will answer no good Purpose, as this City is so distant from any Port, must desire you to inform them that we cannot advise or Countenance their making the Journey. The sums you advance for their relief you will send us an Account of, which we will repay you with thanks for the Trouble you may be at.

We are, &c.,  
B. FRANKLIN,  
SILAS DEANE.

P. S. Your Letters under Cover to Mess<sup>rs</sup>. Geradot, Heller & C<sup>o</sup> will come safe to our hands.

Please to send us the Price Current of Tobacco, Indigo of Carolina, & Rice.

Mess<sup>rs</sup>. F. & A. Dubbledemots, Rotterdam.

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO SIR ROBERT FINLAY.

Paris, Nov<sup>r</sup> 23<sup>d</sup>, 1777.

DEAR SIR,—I should have wrote you before this, but really wished to have been able to have sent you certain news from America. We have waited here at



Paris & watched every Post & Courier till we are tired, though the Ministry in England have in the meantime amused us with news extraordinary every Week; but, unluckily, it has been too extraordinary to be credited.

All that the Publick can rely on is that Howe landed on the last of August at the Head of Chesapeak & that Burgoyne & his victorious Troops & thousands of Indians have been soundly beaten & Starved. We are looking for the King's Speech; if it arrives in Season will send it to you by this Post. The Arrival of a Brother from America, who is soon to return, with some other affairs unforeseen when I proposed being at Bourdeaux this month, have forced me to defer my Journey. I am not the less obliged to you for your kind Wishes to see me there. In reality the Pleasure I promised myself in yours, & the Society of some Friends there, was one principal motive in my proposing the Journey, & I am sensibly mortify'd at the Disappointment.

I am, &c.,

SILAS DEANE.

To Sir Robert Finlay.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO WILLIAM MCCREERY.

Paris, Nov<sup>r</sup> 23<sup>d</sup>, 1777.

DEAR SIR,—The Gentleman I mentioned sometime since is arrived, but the attention of every one is now so entirely fixed on the News which is hourly expected from America, that it is not a Time to urge any thing on the Subject of your Billets from the Loan Office. Holland is the Place where it is most probable to take, & this the Person, M<sup>r</sup> Carmical, refferr'd to; I have the most intimate Acquaintance & I may say Friendship with him. You may rely on it that if any thing can be done in the affair, M<sup>r</sup> Carmichael & I can affect it. We will not be unmindful. I am sorry for the foolish affair of the Portsmouth, and Particularly so, as I find it has given you so much uneasiness. Rest

assured that the Commissioners will be attentive to whatever passes here on the Subject, meantime make yourself easy. The Orders you gave the Vessel you was concerned in will set your Conduct in a Just light, & though individuals may wish to alarm & terrify you, I cannot imagine it will be made a serious affair of with respect to you or any one, except the Capt<sup>t</sup>, who was undoubtedly to blame. Tho' he may plead the Conduct of our Enemies in Palliation, yet to make Prizes in that manner is contrary to the Rules & Laws established. I intended to have made a Journey to Bourdeaux this Month, but am prevented, & what I have so long wished for is still at an uncertain Distance. Pray write if any thing occurs, as early as Possible, that we may not be imposed upon by the Reports which are circulated as coming from Bourdeaux, which we wish to believe, but know not their Foundation.

I am, &c., &c.,

SILAS DEANE.

Mr W<sup>m</sup> McCreery.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO MESSRS. DELAP.

Paris, Nov<sup>r</sup> 23<sup>d</sup>, 1777.

DEAR SIR,—We wrote you the 21<sup>st</sup> a joint Letter respecting the Capture made by the Portsmouth off your River, since which nothing new has occurred; my Brother's arrival from America, and his being about soon to return, obliges me to defer my intended visit to Bordeaux. I am much obliged to you for your kind invitation to your house, and assure you that the pleasure I promised myself in seeing & Conversing with you was a principal motive in my determining to make the Journey. You wrote me sometime since that you would send me the Twolions [Timoleon's] Accounts, which imagine you have omitted in expectation of my being at Bordeaux; as I am disappointed in that for the present, desire you would transmit them,



that I may finish that unfortunate affair as soon as possible. My Brother will sail in about three weeks for Virginia, where he is about to establish an House by the Firm name of Simeon Deane & Co., at Petersburg in Virginia; he has engaged Considerable Consignments & has good Connections in that State, particularly with the house of Mess<sup>rs</sup> John King & Co., of Petersburg, which is a place well situated for the Tobacco Trade, as well as for the disposal of European Goods; should you or any of your Friends send that way, shall be glad of an opportunity of his doing their Business, and of rendering them any service that may be in his or my Power; for though I am not immediately concerned, my acquaintance with the Principal Persons in that Country may be of Considerable service, which I shall be happy in promoting.

I am, &c.,

SILAS DEANE.

I took the Liberty to send you the 1<sup>st</sup> inst., under Cover, a Letter to B. Deane, Esq<sup>r</sup>. to be forwarded. Please to say if it has been received and sent forward. Messrs. Delap.

*Thomas Mss.*

WILLIAM LEE TO RICHARD HENRY LEE.

Paris, 24 Nov., 1777.

MY D<sup>r</sup> B<sup>r</sup>.—I have rec<sup>d</sup> the appointments of Congress for me to go to Vienna & Prussia as their Commissioner, & by this op<sup>ty</sup> have wrote to Congress, addressed to the Secretary, Cha<sup>s</sup> Thompson, Esq<sup>r</sup>, as no particular mode of correspondence is pointed out in my instructions. That letter will no doubt be communicated to Congress, to which, therefore, be pleased to refer; but I will add to you that the clerk who wrote the Commissions has in both made some capital mistakes. In one, The State of Virginia is twice mention'd in the Title, & in the other the state of Maryland is twice mention'd.

I should suppose, & humbly submit, that the style & Title in such commissions sh<sup>d</sup> run thus: "The Delegates of the Independant and United States of, &c., &c., &c., in North America, assembled in Congress," have determined so & so. I presume 'tis the intention of Congress to put all their Commissioners on the same footing as those at Paris. See their Votes of Sept. 28, 1776, especially when 'tis considered that Vienna is as gay & expensive a Court as any in Europe, but by some accident they have omitted to make any provision for M<sup>r</sup> Izard or myself. This, I trust, you will contrive to have regulated soon, which I shou<sup>d</sup> suppose may be done without seeming to be too personally busy in it yourself. The Line that Congress has tho't proper to place me in, on reflection I rather doubt my abilities to succeed in, agreeable to their wishes or those of my particular friends; but on mature consideration I am resolved to enter on the service, because I do not know whom they cou<sup>d</sup> get here, that is unemployed, to execute those necessary functions better than myself, & because I find from experience that it is not in my power to render the public any essential services in the Mercantile line, since M<sup>r</sup> Deane has, in fact, taken on himself the authority of suspending the Secret Committee's appointment of M<sup>r</sup> Tho<sup>s</sup> Morris & myself as Mercantile Agents, by appointing M<sup>r</sup> Jonathan Williams, a young Man of ab<sup>t</sup> 22 Y<sup>rs</sup> old, & Nephew to Dr. Franklin, as Agent for the public business in Nantes, & order'd him to take charge of selling all prizes made by Continental Armed Vessels, giving orders at the same time to Cap<sup>ts</sup> to put their prizes into M<sup>r</sup> Williams's hands, tho' he knows perfectly well that the sale of prizes was expressly committed to M<sup>r</sup> Morris and Myself by the Secret Com<sup>e</sup>. See their letter of Oct. 25, 1776, to M<sup>r</sup> T. M. In this last business M<sup>r</sup> D. says he acted with the approbation and consent of Dr. Franklin; but the letters on the Subject, I am well inform'd, both to M<sup>r</sup> Williams & the Cap<sup>ts</sup> are sign'd



by M<sup>r</sup> Deane alone. His view in appointing M<sup>r</sup> Williams must be so evident to you & everyone else that I have no occasion to mention it. I cou'd not, therefore, continue to act for the Public without coming to an open rupture with M<sup>r</sup> Deane, which, at this critical moment, might be attended with bad consequences to our Public, because it wou'd lessen us in the Eyes of Europe, & give our Enemies at least some exultation, if not an opportunity of operateing something greatly to the disadvantage of America. I therefore waite with patience, not doubting that the Com<sup>e</sup> will vindicate their own appointment, for if M<sup>r</sup> Deane has any charge against M<sup>r</sup> Morris, I fancy he will not presume to make any against me; if he does, I am perfectly ready to meet him on that Ground.

In fact, the public business in this Country has been, & is likely to continue, in very strange disorder; nor is it likely to mend until the S[ecret] Com<sup>e</sup> confine all their mercantile business to their mercantile agent, & keep the Com<sup>rs</sup> to their political duty, which may be neglected from too much attention to private schemes of Commerce on public funds, & contemptible private Jobs. I am now out of the question, therefore cannot be charged with partiality in my advice; but if it is tho't proper to continue the appointment of a Mercantile superintendent, I do not know anyone that will serve the public better than M<sup>r</sup> John Lloyd, of S<sup>c</sup> Carolina, who is now settled at Nantes. He is a Merchant of very fair Character, much experience, & ability. M<sup>r</sup> Laurens, of S<sup>c</sup> Car., knows M<sup>r</sup> LL. You will have from another hand a state of what supplies have been furnished for the public use by our friends here & in Spain. I have now sent a copy to our F. L. Lee. The manufactured articles sh<sup>d</sup> be enquir'd for, as we do not hear of any miscarrying that have been ship'd, except a part of those sent by the Seine. M<sup>r</sup> Francis Lewis, of New York, is a sensible, intelligent Merch<sup>t</sup>. I have therefore sent him a copy of these supplies, that he may act in the business as he

finds necessary. I have often heard that short Accounts make long friends, therefore, as the Commissioners have already rec<sup>d</sup> in Money, Three Million, One hundred & eighty seven thousand, five Hundred Livres, for your use, is it not incumbent on you to call immediately for an account of the expenditure of this money? Certainly you ought without a day's delay. I understand there is a negotiation on foot for borrowing a Considerable sum of money, which, I dare say, will easily succeed, if Gen<sup>l</sup> Howe does not get possession of Phil<sup>a</sup>. Shou'd this money be borrowed, it shou'd by all means be kept as a Sacred deposit, not by any means to be touched without the express orders of Congress. 'Tis absolutely certain that all the Articles you can want for the Army from Europe can be purchased very considerably cheaper & infinitely better in quality in Germany & Sweden & the Northern Countries than they can in France or any where South, Such as Brass & Iron Ordnance of all kinds, fusils, powder, Sulphur, Copper, Steel Bombs, Shot, Cloth, linen for shirts, stockings, Sail Cloath, Anchors, Cables, & all kinds of Cordage. 'Twill be perfectly easy to get any of these things ship'd from some of the Northern ports, provided there is proper prudence & secresy used; sometimes sent directly to America round Scotland, sometimes to the ports of Spain & France, to be reship'd from thence. 2 or 3 ships, cover'd under foreign names as owners, might be very beneficially employed in this business. A Cargoe now & then of Tob<sup>o</sup>, rice, & Indigo or Furs, sent round Scotland to Embden, in the Prussian Dominions, w<sup>d</sup> turn to good Acc<sup>t</sup>, & w<sup>d</sup> be gladly rec<sup>d</sup> there; but these cargoes sh<sup>d</sup> be trusted with careful & diligent Cap<sup>ts</sup> with faithful Officers, & some Soldiers on board to act as Marines, or else there will be danger of the Sailors run.g away with vessel & Cargoe, as they have often done already. This plan will answer the double purpose of saving y<sup>r</sup> property and breeding Seamen. I am just inform'd that at first M<sup>r</sup> Williams was sent to Nantes by all the



Com<sup>rs</sup> to superintend the shiping and buying some Arms, &c., for them in the early part of last Spring, as they did not choose to trust that business with M<sup>r</sup> Tho<sup>s</sup> Morris; but since that, M<sup>r</sup> Deane, long after I came to France, took from M<sup>r</sup> M. & Myself the sale of prizes, as before mention'd, & now seems to think his appointment of M<sup>r</sup> Williams ought in all cases to be superior to the Committee's appointment of M<sup>r</sup> Morris & me. If the Committee submits to this, or do not explicitly stigmatize such presumptuous Conduct, I am perfectly confident their business here will grow more and more disordered than it is already, & is is bad enough at present in all conscience. Your greatest Enemies cou'd not wish your affairs to be more deranged than they are on this side, and they are likely to continue so until order & regularity is establish'd on your side, where the power rests. I have just discharged what I think my Duty in thus giving you a true state of y<sup>r</sup> affairs here, & shall from henceforth take my leave of this department, keeping my attention entirely confin'd to the charge which is committed to my care. The General System of Politics in Europe, the Com<sup>rs</sup> will, no doubt, give you. In my private opinion, there will not be any War soon on this side the Atlantic. France & Spain wish you success, because they think whatever takes from the strength of G. B. adds to their own; whatever covert aid, therefore, that they can give, you may be sure of receiving, but the disorderly conduct of some of y<sup>r</sup> Privateers & their crews has given them a good deal of Embarrassment, because they are in no preparation to go to open War with England; at the same time wish to harrass her as much as they can. Too much care cannot be taken in regulating y<sup>r</sup> Privateers. Any irregular conduct or breach of the laws of Nations, with respect to Neutral powers, sh<sup>d</sup> be severely punish'd, or else whenever the War ends, the whole Sea for a long time will be infested with Pirates. The present system & connections between the different

powers of Europe have been form'd on a supposition of a certain Strength in G. B., & until it appears that you are able to support with certainty y<sup>r</sup> independance, that system cannot easily be changed ; otherwise we sh<sup>d</sup> have been at War here before this day. The first rupture on this side will most probably spread War & devastation over every Country in Europe.

In my letter to the Secret Com<sup>e</sup> of this date, I have mention'd the plans proposed by me to Mess. Montandouin, frere, of Nantes, & M<sup>r</sup> And<sup>w</sup> Limozin, of Havre de Grass, for undertak.g the public business, & now inclose you the papers, that you may be fully master of the Subject ; but M<sup>r</sup> Limozin's Letter to me, dated 5 Oct., 1777, I beg you will carefully preserve, as it may be of use hereafter. So strangely is business managed here, that it is now above a fortnight since I have been waiting for a copy of the Treaty to propose to Vienna & Berlin, & have not yet got it from the Com<sup>rs</sup>, tho' there are 3 or 4 hangers-on that are maintain'd at the public expence, & for some of whom there will probablie by & bye be a charge made as Secretary to the Com<sup>rs</sup>. I have thus discharged my Duty & my Conscience in giving you a full state of some proceedings here, of which I have no doubt you will make a prudent & discreet use.

I am, Most Sincerely, Y<sup>rs</sup>,

W. LEE.

You may write to me in the Cypher sent by A. L., when there is occasion, for surely you will receive one of the books he sent for that purpose. From the King's speech to Parliam<sup>t</sup>, now sent with other papers, you'll see another Campaign is already determin'd on. You have also a parcel with Wilkes's Speeches all printed in 2 Vol<sup>s</sup>



MESSRS. DESEGRAY AND BEAUGEARD.

Paris, 25<sup>th</sup> Nov<sup>r</sup>, 1777.

GENTLEMEN,—M<sup>r</sup> Beaugard has undoubtedly informed you that he has received Bills for the Salt Petre ; Capt. Thompson cannot receive any part of it, and we must wait untill some other opportunity present. There will not be any difficulty on the part of the Ministers. The Price of Freight offered in yours of the 31<sup>st</sup> Ultimo is too high. Ships have within these five Weeks been taken up at 210, 220, to 240 livres pr Tonn, to & from America, the owners risquing their Vessels, paying every expence, and to receive the freight on the Return to France, which is less than half the Sum asked by M<sup>r</sup> Ficket. The money paid M<sup>r</sup> Chandler & that to Capt. Brown shall be reimbursed. The former did very wrong in not following your advice, and I must desire you in future when American Seamen arrive who have escaped from England, to advise them to embark on the first Vessel returning to America, as their going from one Port to another is expensive & of no service, whereas they may be sent directly back, if Vessels are going, with very little expence.

I am, &amp;c., &amp;c.,

SILAS DEANE.

To Mess<sup>rs</sup> Desegray, Beaugard, fils, & C<sup>o</sup>, S<sup>t</sup> Maloes.*Thomas Mss.*

TO PATRICK HENRY.

Paris, Nov<sup>r</sup> 25<sup>th</sup>, 1777.

DEAR SIR,—I take the liberty of recommending to your Civilities M<sup>r</sup> Grand, who is the bearer of this ; he is the Son of a Principal Banker of this City, my particular Friend, & one who has render'd very essential Service to the Commissioners here, as well as to our Cause in general. He has views of establishing him-

self in Virginia, either in Commerce or the Purchase of Lands, perhaps in both, which induces me to address him immediately to your Patronage & good offices whilst in America.

I have the Honor to be, &c.,

SILAS DEANE.

His Excellency Patrick Henry.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO MESSRS. BERRARD AND FRERES.

Paris, Nov<sup>r</sup> 26<sup>th</sup>, 1777.

GENTLEMEN,—Yours of the 17<sup>th</sup> is before us; our Letter by your Express will direct you how to proceed with the Cargo of the *Amphitrite*. The Ship herself is at the Orders of M<sup>r</sup> Peltier, and the sooner he has her the better, but the Cargo is at ours.

In regard to which we have nothing to alter from the Directions given in our former until you favour us with an Answer to our last. The Expences of repairing, &c. the two Frigates Capt. Thompson will settle with you, to whom we refer on the Subject. The Expence of sending the Prisoners to England must be taken out of the Gross amount of the Prizes before the division is made.

We observe what you propose as to the Ship lately bought by you and others, but are of opinion that an Exchange between that ship & Capt. Hinman cannot be effected without too much delay & loss of Time. By the description given us of the Ship it appears to us that if she were loaded out with Salt or other heavy Goods for Boston, & the Vessel sold there, it will be the best Plan that can be pursued, on which we refer you to Capt. Thompson & Capt. Hinman whom we have Consulted on the subject, and shall be glad that you will write to us after your Conferring with them what you determine upon.

Capt. Thompson & Capt. Hinman will direct the



Division of the Prize Money agreeable to the Rules of Congress in such Cases.

We are with due respect, Gentlemen, yours, &c.,

B. FRANKLIN.

SILAS DEANE.

Mess<sup>rs</sup> Berrard, Freres, & C<sup>o</sup>, L'Orient.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO BENJAMIN HARRISON.

Paris, Nov<sup>r</sup> 26<sup>th</sup>, 1777.

DEAR SIR,—This will be handed you by M<sup>r</sup> Grand, a young gentleman who visits America to obtain acquaintance in the Country, and, if he find it agreeable, to establish himself in Commerce, or by the Purchase of Lands, in either of which I know of no one that can be of greater service to him than yourself, & I recommend him the more strongly to your Patronage and kind offices when I assure you that his Father, who is a principal Banker in this City, has been particularly friendly to the American Cause, & has constantly rendered the Commissioners every kindness & assistance in his Power, as have his Family & Connections. I have only to wish M<sup>r</sup> Grand a safe arrival, & that he may find Virginia answer his Expectations here. I have the Honor to remain, with the most sincere respect,

Sir, yours, &c.,

SILAS DEANE.

Hon<sup>ble</sup> B. Harrison, Esq<sup>r</sup>

*Thomas Mss.*

ROBERT MORRIS TO HENRY LAURENS.

Manheim, December 26<sup>th</sup>, 1777.

SIR,—On the 17th inst, I received at this place two letters from my friend, Mr. John Ross, dated in Nantes, the 2nd of August and 20th of September, which came, via Virginia, in a sloop called the Congress

lately arrived there. These letters were written for the purpose of making me acquainted with the unworthy conduct of my brother, Mr. Thomas Morris, in Nantes, and their contents shocked me to the very soul; I perceived instantly how grossly I had long been imposed on, and deemed it my duty to have him immediately discharged from the agency in which he was employed for the public. Accordingly, I wrote that very day to the Hon. William Smith, Esq., a member of the commercial committee, an account of this intelligence, and enclosing a letter for Mr. Thomas Morris, one for Messrs. Pliarns, Penet & Co., and another for Mr. J. Gruel, requesting they might be signed, if approved by the committee, and dispatched in order that Mr. Morris might be dismissed, and the business that had passed under his direction be brought to a settlement as soon as possible. All these letters I wished to have laid before the Congress for their approbation, and in order to prove that I had not a wish to retain my brother in the public service one moment after I knew him to be unworthy of the employ. I then thought these letters would be all that was necessary on the occasion, and that my brother's dismissal would have wiped away the discredit his conduct had brought on our commercial department, and the final settlement of the accounts have ended the disgrace he had brought on me, leaving only himself the victim of his folly. But on the 23d instant I received several letters from Mr. Deane, by the eastern post, wrote in consequence of one that I had unfortunately written to him the 29th June last, whilst under the influence of an unjust and erroneous opinion that the commissioners had used my brother very cruelly in their manner of mentioning him to Congress. In this letter I censured them freely, believing that I had sufficient reason for doing so. These censures of the very unwarrantable use Mr. Thomas Morris made of the letter have excited the keenest resentment of the commissioners against me, and, I confess, as things



are really circumstanced, I am not surprised at it. This resentment has impelled them to put the harshest interpretation on some passages in my letter, and to represent my conduct, in respect to my brother, in colours it did not deserve.

The receipt of these letters distressed me exceedingly, because I had been convinced by Mr. Ross that I was in the wrong with respect to the commissioners, and had determined to acknowledge it fully and freely to them; but on finding that, although my letter to Mr. Deane was a private one, and his to me the same, yet he desired I should lay his before Congress. It was compelling me to open before that august body a dispute that I thought they ought not to be troubled with; yet, as his letters insinuate many charges against me, I concluded to comply with his request and vindicate myself against insinuations and reflections not founded in justice or reality. I find, however, by a letter received yesterday, that copies of these letters from Mr. Deane to me have already been read in Congress, consequently that it is unnecessary for me to bring the original; and my design in giving you, sir, the trouble of reading and Congress of hearing this letter, is not to recriminate on Mr. Deane, but to justify myself, and this I propose to do by a plain narrative of the facts that have led me into the present embarrassments, and I must ask a patient and candid hearing from you and them.

Mr. Thomas Morris and myself are descended from a father whose virtue and whose memory I have ever revered with the most filial piety. Our mothers were not the same, and this youth was born after his father's decease, without any sufficient provision made for his maintenance. The tender regard I bore to the parent, I determined when very young to extend to his offspring, and no sooner had I fixed myself in the world than I took charge of this brother. I gave him the best education that could be obtained in Philadelphia, and took as much care of his morals as my time and

capacity enabled. When he was arrived at a proper age, I took him into my counting-house to instruct him in the profession from which he was to draw his future support. In this situation he remained about three years, during which time he discovered on all occasions a good understanding, sound judgment, and clear head, with remarkable facility in dispatching business. His behaviour was then modest and innocent, his heart pure, and he possessed a mind strongly actuated by principles of honour; at least, these were the opinions I had formed, and such was the character he bore amongst his own acquaintance; from hence I formed the most pleasing expectation, and saw but one source from which any reverse could spring. This was a fondness he early discovered of being the head of his company, a disposition more dangerous to youth than any other, and which, in fact, has been his ruin. This it was that first led him to seek improper company, who, readily granting him the preëminence he delighted in, soon carried him into the practice of their follies and vices. When I discovered this to be the case, and found that advice had not its proper weight, and thinking frequent exercise of authority might be dangerous, I fell on the expedient of sending him to Spain (in order to break off his connection with worthless companions), and there placed him in an eminent counting-house, where he gained much knowledge and experience, and where he acquired the French and Spanish languages, so as to write and speak both with great fluency. At a proper season I recalled him to America, and took him a partner in our house, promising myself assistance and relief from his abilities and expected assiduity, and for some time had great satisfaction in him; but, unfortunately, his former associates found him out and again led him astray. At this period the commercial business of America was interrupted by certain resolutions of Congress, and, fearing that idle time and these associates would bring him to ruin, I deter-



mined on sending him to Europe well recommended, with money in his pocket, in hopes to open his mind, extend his ideas, and give him a habit of keeping and seeking good company. He travelled through Spain, Italy, and into France, with reputation kept by means of introductions. I procured for him the best company in every place he went to, and I had the pleasure to receive many letters from my friends, as well as from himself, in the most satisfactory style. These letters, his assurances, and those from some friends on his behalf, regained my confidence, and I judged that he had now arrived at the period of proper reflection; for such usually happens to young people who have been too volatile in the first stages of manhood. At this period it happened that a commercial agent became necessary to have a general superintendency of the public business in Europe. My brother was then in France (as I thought), possessed of my good opinion; and, reflecting that he was qualified for that agency by his education in two counting-houses, where he had seen and executed much business; by his perfect knowledge of the languages, and by his being connected with some of the best mercantile houses in Europe, and known to many more, I was prompted to offer his services to the Committee, firmly believing he would be extremely useful, and do honour to himself and me. Here I must observe that no part of his conduct had ever given me the least cause to suspect any want of integrity or breach of honour. Therefore, the only doubts I did or could entertain were, whether he would bestow that attention that he ought to this business; and for this I depended on the assurances he had given in his letters of a faithful execution of any commands I might lay on him. The committee, of which Dr. Franklin was then a member, was pleased to accept the offer, and on the doctor's going to France, he promised me to become a friend and adviser to my brother, if he found it necessary; Mr. Deane had promised this before his departure, and

to make me acquainted with his conduct. I reposed myself in confidence that he could not do any harm (as I should soon hear how he managed, and could act accordingly), and he might do much good. At the same time that I recommended him to the agency, I intrusted him to collect the debts due to our house in Europe, and pay the balances we might owe there; and since then have continued to employ him in the management of our own business. This must convince every person that I had full confidence in him, as I would not have intrusted my own property and affairs in what I could think doubtful hands.

I have given this long detail to show the foundation on which I recommended my brother to his employment, and I think any other person in my situation would have done the same thing. However, if I am any ways culpable in having done so, it is the event and not the intention that makes me so; for could I have had the least idea of what had happened, I would sooner have perished than he should have been trusted.

The next thing I am blamed for is granting greater faith to my brother's representations than to the commissioners' letters. This was only the case in part, for I had other evidence than his letters; however, I must also account for my conduct in this respect by a detail of circumstances.

It happened very unfortunately that about the time Thomas Morris was appointed in America to this agency, he had gone from France to London, where, totally unable to withstand the tempting scenes of pleasure that sink of iniquity affords, he gave in to the pursuit with an eagerness (as I am now informed) that debauched his mind and laid the foundation for all that has since happened. He was in London at the time his letters of appointment arrived at Paris. Mr. Deane sent for him. He came and promised a faithful attention to business; he repaired to Nantes, and finding that Mr. Penet had been intrusted with a contract for public business, part of which had been



executed, he readily fell into the proposals made by that house and became a party in it, but on what terms I do not know; consequently he put the public business into their hands (which was not inconsistent with the instructions under which he acted). Whilst things were in this train in France, I received a letter from the gentleman in Cadiz with whom my brother had lived, a worthy man, who had great regard for him and wished to promote his welfare. He gave me reason to suppose his conduct in London had been out of character, and this gave the first alarm to my fears.

In consequence of which I wrote letters on the 31st January last to Mr. Deane, to Mr. Ross, and to Mr. Thomas Morris, informing them of this intelligence, and pressing their immediate care and attention to the public business; should he neglect it, I requested my friend Ross to visit France on purpose to watch and inform me truly what was his conduct, and insisted to my brother that if he had been guilty of any neglect of duty or misconduct in discharge of his public trust, that he should resign it into the hands of Mr. Deane or Mr. Ross, empowering them regularly to act for him until new arrangements were made. This done, I awaited impatiently for the event. In the meantime some disputes and mutual complaints had arisen between Mr. Deane and my brother, and, on the arrival of the above letters the latter went to Paris, where they so far settled matters that he returned to Nantes with Mr. Deane's sanction (Mr. Ross, being at Hamburg, did not arrive until long after). Some ships arrived from Philadelphia at Nantes about this time, with cargoes on public account, consigned to the order of Thomas Morris, particularly the Success, Captain Anderson, and Elizabeth and Mary, Captain Young. By the return of one or both of these (I think) came letters from the commissioners, saying, to the best of my remembrance, "that Mr. Thomas Morris must be immediately displaced from his

agency," and another, quoting the paragraph of Dr. Lee's letter from Bordeaux. Having no private letter then from Mr. Deane on this subject, I was astonished at the style of these to Congress; for, supposing my brother guilty of some inattention, which was the most I did suppose, I could not think it right to blast entirely a young man's reputation that was just setting out in the world, merely because he was fond of pleasure; and as the letters he had written respecting the business under his care were full and clear, they were produced to Congress in his justification, and to prevent any hasty measures. I then related to Congress the substance of what I have now written, but not so fully; and many members, as well as myself, were surprised at the affair as it then stood. In consequence of what the commissioners had wrote, I referred myself to Mr. Thomas Morris' private letters more particularly. I found there was no good understanding between Mr. Deane and him (but of Doctor Franklin he wrote respectfully), and he intimated that Mr. Deane was privately his enemy. Not trusting, however, to his letters, I applied to several persons that came from Nantes, who assured me there was nothing amiss in his conduct that they knew or heard of; but more particularly one person who had transacted business with him. This gentleman assured me over and over that he lived two months in the house with my brother; that he saw him assiduous, attentive, and industrious; that if it had not been for him, the business of those ships would not have been done in any reasonable time, and that I might depend my brother would give entire satisfaction; at least he was fully persuaded of this. He said he knew well there were persons in France that envied his appointment, and would leave nothing undone to have him displaced, and particularly mentioned Mr. Williams, who he heard was nephew to one and concerned in trade with another of the commissioners, as the person intended to supply his place. The relator of this account is now in



America, a man of character, sensible, and capable for his sphere of life, and when Mr. Deane arrives he shall have the satisfaction of seeing and examining him; till then I think it best to keep his name for my own sake.

This relation and others less full, my brother's and other letters, and Mr. Deane's silence, led me to give some credit to the story; and although I was ever willing to displace my brother on the least just cause appearing, yet I confess I did not like that he should be sacrificed to make room for another person; and when Mr. Deane's first letters on the subject of my brother did arrive, they did not remove the impressions I had received. Still I had not full confidence that some cause for what was written had not been given on his part, and I supposed his neglect or misconduct to have been magnified in the account given thereof to the commissioners, who could not have been eye-witnesses. In this situation I wrote the letter of the 29th June, that has so irritated them, telling very fully what I heard, and censuring freely what I thought wrong. Before I sent this letter I showed it to some members of Congress, relating truly, as I have now done, the circumstances that induced me to write it, and they thought me right, as things then appeared. When Mr. Ross arrived at Nantes, he advised me of it, and promised immediately to enter into an examination of my brother's conduct, and give me a faithful account of it; but he was above ten weeks there before he wrote that account, and I do suppose was trying what he could do by exhortation, &c. At last the shocking account came on the 17 inst., and that day I requested my brother might be dismissed from his employment, giving notice to Congress of his misconduct.

Here, sir, have I given a candid account of my reasons for introducing this unhappy man into public employ, and for not sooner soliciting his dismissal. I did the first in hopes of his being serviceable to the public, at the same time that he would enjoy an honourable and beneficial employment. I have done the

latter as soon as I was convinced it ought to be done. Until now I had no conception that it was possible for him to act the part he has done, and nothing carries stronger conviction of his being irretrievably lost than his behaviour with my letter of the 29th June. Congress will observe that Mr. Deane complains of my having urged him to resent the injuries I believed they had done him. The paragraph of my said letter to Mr. Deane on that subject is as follows: "I think those public letters are cruel to my brother and extremely unfriendly to myself. I shall inform him of them, and if he has spirit to resent them, I hope he will also have judgment to do it properly."

This letter was enclosed to my brother with the following paragraph: "I now wait with impatience to know the result of your journey with Captain Bell to Paris, for on that and your future conduct depends your commission as commercial agent to the United States of America, and I find there are those that envy you that appointment and wish it out of your hands, as you may see by the enclosed letter for Silas Deane, Esq., which I send open for your perusal; and if you can determine to merit the continuance of that commission by good behaviour, I think I can maintain it for you in spite of all endeavours to the contrary. But if you will not deserve it, I shall be the first to take it from you, and in that case it would hardly be worth while sending the letter to Mr. Deane, only there are some commercial matters in it; therefore you must seal and send it to him. As to what I have said about your resenting their letters, I think you had best not think of any thing of that kind, lest your past behaviour will not support you in doing it; and the best satisfaction you can have will be by holding your post under such good conduct as will deter them from attacking you again."

Thus, sir, you will observe I only hinted resentment in the letter to Mr. Deane, and in fact retracted the idea in this to Thomas Morris, and I solemnly declare these are the only lines I ever wrote in that style.



Here it also appears that my design was to have the letter delivered immediately, without any person seeing it but Mr. Deane and himself. Had that been done, you would not have been troubled on the occasion, but it would have remained a private affair.

The other charges and insinuations are chiefly founded on the ill use Mr. Thomas Morris made of this letter on conjecture and on misinformation. If Mr. Deane had seen the whole of that long private letter he speaks of, he would have seen how false and groundless the several stories told him of it were. Indeed, the contents of that letter, except the paragraph above quoted, would ill suit Thomas Morris to show any one; for, knowing his own conduct, they must have stung him to the soul every time he read them, unless his soul was grown too callous to have a feeling left.

Mr. Deane seems to remark on my private letters requesting him to displace Thomas Morris from his employment if found unworthy of it, as if I meant thereby to exercise an undue authority as member of Congress. But this is a strained construction; the only authority I must or could mean to exercise was that of an elder brother over a younger, dependent on him for his support, and accountable to him for his conduct; and, under this idea, I insisted that he should empower Mr. Deane or Mr. Ross to act in his stead and under his authority if they thought it necessary, which shows I had no design of exercising any other authority than the influence I expected my letters as an individual would have had on my brother; and I still think if these had been insisted on at that time, he would have yielded to them. As to the expressions I used, "of supporting him in his appointment if his conduct would justify it, and that all the commissioners together should not remove him if he did his duty," etc., they may have been too strong; but I was writing these under the influence of a (groundless) belief that they had done him injustice, and I knew Congress would not displace him or any of their servants that did their duty.

Upon the whole, this was a private letter that has produced these animadversions on my conduct, and therefore, not wrote with any particular guard or caution ; but it adds very much to the distress and unhappiness this unworthy young man has involved me in, to think I should have passed censures on Doctor Franklin and Mr. Deane (Doctor Lee was not mentioned), which they did not deserve. I did it under a deception that most men of feeling would have fallen into, and I shall as freely own it to them as I do to you, holding it more honourable to acknowledge an error and atone for any injuries produced by it, than with a vindictive spirit to persist, because you happen to have committed it. The account given both by Mr. Ross and Mr. Deane of Mr. Thomas Morris' conduct so far surpasses any thing I could have an idea of, that I do not pretend to animadvert on any part of it. My distress is more than I can describe ; to think that in the midst of the most ardent exertions I was capable of making to promote the interest and welfare of my country, I should be the means of introducing a worthless wretch to disgrace and discredit it is too much to bear. I hope, however, that no pecuniary loss will happen to the public, and that the disgrace and discredit will be wiped away by his dismissal. From this hour I renounce all connection with him, although I cannot help lamenting the loss of what he was capable of being. I shall enclose Mr. Deane a copy of this letter for his satisfaction, and make what I think suitable acknowledgments to both Doctor Franklin and him.

Should Congress think there is any thing more on my part to be done, I am ready to obey their orders ; and with the greatest respect, I remain,

Sir, your most obedient servant,

ROBERT MORRIS.

To his Excellency, Henry Laurens, Esq.,  
President of Congress.

*Materials for History by Frank Moore, Laurens Correspondence, page 71.*



## TO HENRY GRAND.

Paris, 27th Nov., 1777.

MY DEAR SIR,—My Brother will send you several Letters, to which I have added two to Gov<sup>r</sup> Henry & Col. Harrison, who are Gentlemen of great influence in Virginia, & can be of the utmost service to you, and, from the acquaintance I have with them, assure you that you may, with the utmost Confidence, rely on their advice and assistance. Should you have the misfortune to be taken and Carried into New York, the letter to M<sup>r</sup> Sherbrook may be of service to you. He is a worthy man and my old Friend, but advise you at the same time to be very reserved to him as to any thing that has pass'd here in France, as he is zealously engaged on the side of the Enemy. Should you arrive at New London, in Connecticut, my Brother will be happy in having an opportunity of serving you. His acquaintance and Connections are such that he will inform you at once of every thing necessary to be known in that State; but as he generally resides at some Distance from the Port of New London, you need only to send a line to Col. Saltonstall or Mr. Thomas Mumford, acquainting them of your arrival, and that you have Letters from me, & they will gladly procure you any Assistance you may be in want of. I hope you will not take it as unseasonable or improper if I just hint to you that the present Situation of the Country you are going to requires that you should be constantly on your Guard, and not to put Confidence in any one without his being well recommended to you by some one on whom you can rely. The War has drawn into America many needy adventurers from different Parts of the World, & possibly has made some so in the Country who were not before of that Character. By attending to the advice of the Gentlemen to whom you are recommended, you will be safe from their Designs, which will undoubtedly be levelled against every stranger.

I most sincerely wish you a good Voyage & every kind of Success.

I am, &c.,

SILAS DEANE.

M<sup>r</sup> Henry Grand.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO JONATHAN WILLIAMS.

Paris, 28<sup>th</sup> Nov<sup>r</sup>, 1777.

DEAR SIR,—Yours of the 18<sup>th</sup>, & the Letters inclosed, I received, but as no American speaks to Hynson at present, I have thrown the Letters by. I wait to see what may come of his strange conduct. Yours of the 20<sup>th</sup> is before me, and should have been answered sooner, but expected every day, when Cushing, &c., would set out for Nantes. The money advanced to Williams was from the public stock, & I mentioned it only that in justice those relieved then ought, as soon as they find employ, to refund it; but, situated as this officer is, should I ask it, it would be taken in a wrong Light, & misrepresented; therefore I desire nothing may be said about it. The goods from Holland I hope are arrived; refer you to my Brother's Letters on that head. As to the Bales you mention, and propose sending out by your Brother Jack in the Brig, it will be very agreeable to my Brother, to whom I communicated your proposal, and who will write you on the subject; but if you prefer sending them in one of M<sup>r</sup> Montieu's Vessels, it is equally agreeable to me, and you may regulate the affair as you propose in yours. M<sup>r</sup> Peltier must have rec<sup>d</sup> his Letter from M<sup>r</sup> Montieu, an abstract of w<sup>h</sup> I send you inclosed. The Winter approaches, and I must know if possible how soon the Lyon, &c., will be ready, & when a certain Person is to meet them, as well as where; What number of Fusees have been from the first completely repaired out of the Magazine, & how many will be by March next? I want to know this, to silence some insinuations, as if it was



a bad & ruinous contract. My Letters to you unanswered are the 15<sup>th</sup>, 20<sup>th</sup>, & 21<sup>st</sup>. Please to say if you have received them, & what is done as to the sale of the Dolphin. I don't recollect ever writing anything particularly about Capt. Brown's going in the Brig, & between you & I, it appears to me that M<sup>r</sup> Ross's dissatisfaction has arose from some other cause. Be it what it will, I hope he is satisfied, as I offered him the whole or any part of the Brig he pleased, with the consent of my Brother, & he assured me he had no want of her, nor wished to be concerned in her at all. I shall write you again by Cushing or Moylan. Meantime, I am, &c.

SILAS DEANE.

P. S. 29<sup>th</sup> Since writing the above, yours of the 25<sup>th</sup> came to hand, & I am glad to find you can regulate your Plan with M<sup>r</sup> Moylan so satisfactorily to both, & I hope that a still farther arrangement may be made whereby you may continue at Nantes on a more agreeable as well as profitable footing. In regard to what you have transacted and are now engaged in, my advice is, that on dispatching what you now have on hand, you make out your accounts to that time, by which may be seen at once the business you have done & a reward adequate fixed on, respecting which I am very sensible of the justice of your observations. I can say nothing as to Montieu's cloths, except that they must, according to contract, compare with those of Sabbatier & Co.; as to the comparison made here, M<sup>r</sup> Montieu's Uncle brought a suit to me which was a little size, less than the least of Sabbatier's, but he could not say whether they were the 2<sup>d</sup> or 3<sup>d</sup> size of theirs; if the third, the objection could not be great, but if the 2<sup>d</sup>, it makes an essential one, which, as you have the cloths on the spot, you can ascertain. I really wish they would answer. God knows they are wanted in America; but if, as you mentioned, the least size are too small for any number of American

Soldiers, I cannot see how it can be admitted, or what purpose they would answer if actually sent, besides the injustice of giving M<sup>r</sup> Montieu the same price for small cloths, as is given you and M<sup>r</sup> Sabbatier for large ones. Take M<sup>r</sup> Peltier with you and make the comparison jointly, by which he will be satisfied whether the objections are just or not; also make another Experiment: weigh 100 suits of Sabbatier's cloths & 100 of Montieu's of the same Taille, & note the differences; in coarse cloths this, although not absolutely decisive, is a good leading rule to judge their value. My Brother writes you pr. this Conveyance as to the Dolphin. I leave it entirely with him to purchase her or not as he shall on enquiry judge best. The Commissioners have determined to dispose of her to the best advantage, though they wish not to give her away intirely. You say she will not answer on the American Coast; on what acc<sup>t</sup>? is she too small or too weak? You say you will send her inventory, after which we shall be better judges. I am very impatient to get the Lyon away as well, as the other Vessels carrying goods for the Public. The Brig will probably take advantage of that company of the coast.

S. DEANE.

To M<sup>r</sup> Williams.

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO JONATHAN WILLIAMS.

Paris, Nov<sup>r</sup> 30<sup>th</sup>, 1777.

DEAR SIR,—This will be handed you by M<sup>r</sup> Cutler of Boston, who with M<sup>r</sup> Morris have lately escaped from England and want Passages to America. I have given them money for their Expences to Nantes, and must recommend to you to procure them a passage at as reasonable a rate as may be. M<sup>r</sup> Morris will probably have some money of his own; but whatever you advance, either the one or the other, take their obligations for it, payable to Congress. I think they will



do best to take a passage in Capt. Nicholson, but this you will be the best judge.

I am, with due Esteem, De<sup>r</sup> Sir,

Yours &c.,

S. DEANE.

M<sup>r</sup> Williams.

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO JOHN ROSS.

Paris, Dec<sup>r</sup> 1<sup>st</sup>, 1777.

DEAR SIR,—I received yours of the 25<sup>th</sup> ultimo, and should have replied two or three Days since, but M<sup>r</sup> Moyland setting out, I chose to refer you to him, who will better explain personally than can be done by Letter his plan.

I am happy to find there will not be any misunderstanding between M<sup>r</sup> Williams & him. Respecting the Dolphin, I find by M<sup>r</sup> Williams that she cannot be dismissed until the Lyon sails without great Prejudice. M<sup>r</sup> Hodge proposes to be at Nantes in a few Days, who will consult you on the Spot, & to him I refer, as I shall leave it with him to make use of the Dolphin or not, as you shall Judge Prudent. Cunningham has lately carried another Prize into Spain, loaded with Fish, and Suffer'd himself, in a Gale of Wind, on acco<sup>t</sup> of his Mast being too large: he was altering it, & getting ready for another Cruize. The Letter from thence was dated the 12<sup>th</sup> Nov<sup>r</sup>. I shall be glad to hear of Green's being ready to sail, & to know the arrangements you make as to freight, Consignments, &c. What Concern I have, expect to share like others, & have full Confidence in your Direction of it. I will only hint what occurs to me at present. That the Primary object is to obtain a Cargo of Tobacco for the Ship back. To do which, if the Salt & freight are not sufficient, you must write Mess<sup>rs</sup> Willing & Morris, to whom you will probably Consign her, to draw on my Brother, Barnabas Deane, Esq<sup>r</sup>, to make up my proportion of the Cargo back. In the next Plan, if

the Ship can not be loaded back, and it should be found best to sell her to the Publick, my Interest in her, as well as in her Cargo, I desire may be paid to my Brother, Simeon Deane, at Petersburg, Virginia, should he be arrived there; if not, to my Brother, Barnabas Deane, Esq<sup>r</sup>, in Connecticut. I propose this, should the Vessel be sold, as it's possible she may be Changed with the Publick for another. In that Case, I should incline to continue my Interest, as a return of the Effects here is my Principal object. Please to let me know how soon the Ship will be ready, & I will write you again on the Subject. Refer you to M<sup>r</sup> Moylan, for on which I know not what Judgment to form, except that Burgoyne is undoubtedly ruined; but affairs to the Southward do not look so favorable, tho' I do not think them really bad. I am, &c.,

SILAS DEANE.

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO MESSRS. GOULARD, BERRARD AND FRERES.

Paris, 1<sup>st</sup> Dec<sup>r</sup>, 1777.

GENTLEMEN,—We received yours by Capt. Thompson, & are since favored with yours, in which you send an extract of a Letter from the Committee of Congress to Capt. Fautvil (Fautreul), referring to us to make such Gratification to him & his Sailors as should be judged adequate to their services, as we freighted this Vessel, and as we expect the Owners will demand of us a sum extraordinary, on acc<sup>t</sup> of the detention of the Vessel. We think it most proper that the Owners should make the allowance that is just, & bring it in their extra Charge; this is the Sight in which we view this affair at present, but shall take the earliest Opportunity to Consult further on the subject with the Owner, & write you the result. We observe what you say as to the Rice, as you have fixed the Day for the Sale. We think it best to have the Cargo sold at the Time pro-



posed, & make the best of it. Samples of Rice ought to be taken out of the middle of the Cask. The outside is always liable to be musty in a greater or less Degree. You will therefore examine the middle of the Cask before the sale. We send you the Invoice herewith, and shall be glad to know how you find it on Examination, & also your opinion whether the Indigo will answer better to send to some other market in Europe. Of this you must be the best Judge. I have the honor to remain, &c.,

SILAS DEANE.

Mess<sup>rs</sup> Goulard, Berrard, Freres & C<sup>o</sup>

|                                      |                        |
|--------------------------------------|------------------------|
| N. B. 920 Barrels of Rice . . . . .  | W <sup>t</sup> 514,996 |
| 151 half Barrels of Rice ..          | 40,271                 |
| 20 Casks of Indigo W <sup>t</sup> .. | 9,368                  |

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20 Barrels of Rice taken out, W<sup>t</sup> 10,715.

Cost in Carolina, 45,052 10 4 Curr<sup>y</sup>

*Thomas Mss.*

TO CAPT. JOHN YOUNG.

Paris, 2<sup>d</sup> Dec<sup>r</sup>, 1777.

DEAR SIR,—You will receive by M<sup>r</sup> Moylan dispatches for Congress, which you will secure ready for sinking in case of Danger. On your leaving the River at Nantes, it has been recommended as the safest to keep well in with the coast of France until you can leave the Continent intirely. Of this you will be the best judge. We advise you to avoid speaking with every Vessel on your Passage, and to make the first safe Port you can in the United States; if the wind & weather permit, some port near Boston appears to be the best, But must submit it to your judgment as the winds may serve, or as other circumstances may occur. Capt. Bell will take a Passage with you, & we recommend to you to trust the care of your Dispatches to him in case of accident to yourself (which God forbid), or on your arrival, if the care of your

Vessel or other circumstances prevent your going yourself to Congress therewith, that you can trust them to him, but the Dispatches for Congress are not to be given to other persons than one of you before they are delivered to Congress. Private Letters may be delivered or forwarded as you find opportunity. Your Bills of Disbursements and Expences at Nantes, you informed us, would be settled by M<sup>r</sup> Morris; we have only to say that the Hon. W. Lee, Esq<sup>r</sup>, being joint agent with him, ought to have an account of the Disbursements, at least for his Direction in his accounts. This is not a matter of ours, and we mention it, as we are confident you will do every thing proper to avoid any misunderstanding in that affair. We most heartily wish you a safe & speedy Passage, and recommend you to the notice of Congress for your services.

We are, &c.,

B. FRANKLIN.  
SILAS DEANE.

Capt. Young.

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO CAPT. THOMAS BELL.

Paris, Dec<sup>r</sup> 2<sup>d</sup>, 1777.

DEAR SIR,—The Commissioners send by M<sup>r</sup> Moylan their Dispatches and orders respecting them; as it is expected you will embark with Capt. Young, they have directed him, in case of accident, to trust the Dispatches solely to your care. You are very sensible that the difficulties of doing any thing here in the way we wish have increased since you left us, until they have amounted to a positive prohibition. I do not chuse to commit my mind to Paper on the Vexatious subject, but must confess myself extremely chagrined. I send the Letters to M<sup>r</sup> Morris to your particular care. You are acquainted nearly with the contents, which are a history of your affair. Penet has refused



to pay one shilling on account of the Tobacco, of course. I have not received any thing to reimburse me for the Expences and disbursements which have been drawn on me. I trust, however, to the Honor of M<sup>r</sup> R. Morris, who, I am confident, will not let me suffer in this affair. As you have the accounts, you can explain the matter to M<sup>r</sup> Morris & give him a general state of the affair. The loss will be considerable, as I shall think I do well in regaining the capital. I most sincerely wish you a safe & speedy Voyage to America. I am, &c.,

SILAS DEANE.

To Capt. Bell.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO MESSRS. LEOGANERE.

Paris, Dec<sup>r</sup> 2<sup>d</sup>, 1777.

GENTLEMEN,—Yours of the 12<sup>th</sup> of Nov<sup>r</sup> I received, & return you my thanks for your kind attention to our affairs in your Port. This will be handed you by M<sup>r</sup> Hodge, a Gentleman of Philadelphia, whom I recommend to your civilities. He is empowered to take the care and direction of Capt. Cunningham's Vessel, and it is with pleasure, I assure you, that you may rely on him as a person well acquainted with American affairs, and on whose information you may depend. I shall be happy in the continuance of your correspondence. I am, &c.,

SILAS DEANE.

Mess<sup>rs</sup> Leoganere & C<sup>o</sup>

*Thomas Mss.*

TO JOHN AND WILLIAM HODGE.

Paris, Dec<sup>r</sup> 2<sup>d</sup>, 1777.

GENTLEMEN,—The sloop Revenge, Gustavus Cunningham, Commander, is one-half owned by the Congress of the United States, one-fourth by M<sup>r</sup> Hodge, and one-fourth by Ephraim Cunningham & Co.

Agreeable to our Conversation sometime since, I have wrote Capt. Cunningham to render you an account of his whole proceedings since his leaving Dunkirk and attend your future orders; consequently, if you determine on becoming owners of the rest of said Vessel, viz., the one-half now owned by Congress, you will transmit to me your obligation to account therefor to the Hon<sup>l</sup> Congress of the United States when demanded at the price the said sloop shall be judged to be worth from a just inventory and account of her present actual state; or should it be disagreeable to you to engage on taking this half of the sloop, it is proper that you inform me of it immediately, and at the same time it is my desire that M<sup>r</sup> Hodge proceed to take the charge of said sloop, and that you join him in giving instructions to Capt. Cunningham, agreeable to what I have wrote to said Cunningham, and instead of owners, act as agents of Congress in this adventure, in which case the neat Proceeds will be the Property of Congress; as far as they amount you will inform me before M<sup>r</sup> Hodge leaves Nantes which part to take.

I am, &c.,

SILAS DEANE.

Mess<sup>rs</sup> Jn<sup>o</sup> & W<sup>m</sup> Hodge.

*Thomas Mss*

TO FRANCIS COFFIN.

Paris, 2<sup>d</sup> Dec<sup>r</sup>, 1777.

DEAR SIR,—M<sup>r</sup> Hodge shewed me the Letter which he this Day received from you, as also the account he brought up with him from Dunkirk. The account is much higher than was expected, but this is no fault of yours. You will therefore draw on me for the amount payable 10 days after sight, with M<sup>r</sup> Grand, Banquier Ruemont mastre [Rue Montmartre] Paris; in future must desire you to fix a certain allowance pr week. M<sup>r</sup> Hodge says the extremity should be 10 or 12 Livres pr week for prisoners escaping from England, and that



they be sent by the first Vessel going for Nantes or L'Orient on the lowest Terms, at the first place to M<sup>r</sup> Williams & at the latter to the care of M<sup>r</sup> Moylan or M<sup>r</sup> Goulard or otherwise, as you receive directions from hence. You will be pleased to notice us every port what Prisoners arrive, their Quality, place of residence in America, &c., & I will punctually give you directions respecting them. M<sup>r</sup> Hodge left us this morning. I am, &c.,

SILAS DEANE.

M<sup>r</sup> Coffin, Dunkirk.

*Thomas Mss.*

MESSRS. DELAP.

Paris, 2<sup>d</sup> Dec<sup>r</sup>, 1777.

DEAR SIR,—Yours of the 22<sup>d</sup> ult<sup>o</sup> I received, and am obliged to you for the care you have taken to send us the intelligence contained. The Fate of Capt. Wickes is truly affecting, and the loss every way great. He was one for whom I had the greatest personal Esteem. For the amount of the Expences or charges for the Cloths you must draw on M<sup>r</sup> Franklin & myself, payable at M<sup>r</sup> Grand's. The Bill for 600<sup>l</sup> inclosed in yours I kept in hand until the Drawer arrived, when, considering his situation, we agreed to accept it, & will pay the money as you shall order, though we cannot but think, when he left America, he ought to have taken more precautions than he appears to have done. I wrote you the 23<sup>d</sup>, to which expect y<sup>r</sup> reply in course.

I am, &c.,

SILAS DEANE.

Mess<sup>rs</sup> Delap.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO CARON DE BEAUMARCHAIS.

Passy, Dec<sup>r</sup> 3<sup>d</sup>, 1777.

DEAR SIR,—I received yours of this morning. It is really hard that Capt. Fautroul should suffer an imprison-

ment, instead of being rewarded for the service he has rendered; still harder on you to be deprived of so trifling a Remittance, as the Cargo returned in the Amphitrite, after the immense sums advanced by you in the service of the United States. This is what I can never approve of. The Cargo must be restored to you, and I am sure will be, on your stating the Case to the Commissioners. As to their assisting you by other Payments, it is not in their Power, the money in their disposal being greatly inadequate to the Purposes for which it was originally advanced and for which they stand engaged. You will, I think, do me the Justice to believe that nothing in my Power will ever be wanting to procure Returns to be made proportionable to your very great Disbursements of money & Expence of time in the service of my Country; but untill its affairs take a more prosperous turn I dare not rely on any thing. May that soon be the case!

I am, with the greatest Respect, &c.,

SILAS DEANE.

*Thomas Mss.*

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FROM THE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS.

York, in Pennsylvania, 4th Dec., 1777.

SIR,—In compliance with the order of Congress, we now enclose you their resolve of November 21st last. A duplicate goes by another opportunity.

We are, Sir, &c.,

R. H. LEE.

J. LOVELL.

To Silas Deane, Esq.

[Enclosure.]

In Congress, November 21, 1777.

Resolved, That Silas Deane, Esq., be recalled from the Court of France, and that the Committee for foreign affairs be directed to take proper measures for speedily communicating the pleasure of Congress



herein to Mr. Deane and the other commissioners of the United States at the Court of France.

Resolved, That Monday next be assigned for choosing a commissioner to the court of France in place of Silas Deane, Esq.

*Diplomatic Correspondence, Amer. Rev., I., 117.*

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FROM JAMES LOVELL.

York, 8th December, 1777.

SIR,—By accident I find myself called upon singly to execute the duty of the committee of Foreign Affairs, in communicating to you an order of Congress of this day, respecting your return to America.

The order stands in need of no comment from the committee to elucidate it, and being drawn up in terms complimentary to your abilities of serving these United States upon your arrival here, I take pleasure in conveying it, being, sir, your very humble servant,  
JAMES LOVELL.

[Enclosure.]

In Congress, December 8, 1777.

Whereas, It is of the greatest importance that Congress should, at this critical juncture, be well informed of the state of affairs in Europe; and, whereas, Congress have resolved that the hon. Silas Deane, esq., be recalled from the court of France, and have appointed another commissioner to supply his place there.

Ordered, That the committee for foreign affairs write to the honorable Silas Deane, esq., and direct him to embrace the first opportunity of returning to America, and upon his arrival to repair with all possible despatch to Congress.

*Diplomatic Correspondence, Amer. Rev., I., 117.*

TO JONATHAN WILLIAMS.

Passy, 8<sup>th</sup> Dec<sup>r</sup>, 1777.

DEAR SIR,—The Commissioners expect, in about Eight or Ten Days, to dispatch another Packet for America, & Consequently will not detain Capt. Young. I send you the Gazette Extraordinary of the Court of London, which peruse & forward to M<sup>r</sup> Hancock with the other News Papers sent you. We are still uncertain how soon Capt. Nicholson will be ready for Sea, or if you have Shipp'd all the Goods on Monteu's Two Vessels or otherways. Please to be explicit on this subject in your next.

I hope Capt. Nicholson may set out for Nantes or elsewhere to meet his Ship the last of this Week, when we shall finally determine on his destination. There is no mention of you in the Dispatch from America, nor any thing said on the old subject. I hear that a Continental Ship of War arriv'd at Nantes with Duplicates of the last Dispatches. Tell us in your next what Ship this is, & what her Errand. I am, &c.,

SILAS DEANE.

P. S. As to Capt. Elliot & the other Officers at Nantes, I must leave it with you to supply their present wants in the most Oeconomical manner consistent with their stations. I hope they will not expect more than Pocket money, & to purchase necessary Cloathing for the Voyage. As to paying wages due from Congress to them, we cannot do it. You will take Receipts of them for the sums paid, and give a Duplicate to Capt. Nicholson to Settle in America.

M<sup>r</sup> Williams.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO JOHN ROSS.

Paris, 8<sup>th</sup> Dec<sup>r</sup>, 1777.

DEAR SIR,—On Consulting Doctor Franklin about the proposed Insurance, he declined giving any opin-



ion on the Subject ; it being, he said, a Matter merely commercial & out of his Department. Paris is not the Place to obtain Insurance in, & on the whole it was his opinion to leave the matter intirely to your Judgment to Act in the affair as if it was for yourself. In what situation is Green? Will the Ranger, Vessel of War, answer for a Convoy? How soon will she be ready for sea? Our affairs begin to wear a better aspect, & I hope soon to see the Tide turn intirely. The Crisis is important. The Goods are, I am sensible, exceedingly wanted in America. But if they can go with a Convoy, it will be a very great Security, & I'm labouring to effect it if Possible & am not without Hopes.

I am, &c.,

SILAS DEANE.

To M<sup>r</sup> Ross.

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO ARTHUR LEE.

[Dec<sup>r</sup> 10<sup>th</sup>, 1777.]

DEAR SIR,—The Person who went last Evening for Nantes was M<sup>r</sup> Williams's Servant, who came up with M<sup>r</sup> Austin to shew him the Road & to do some business for M<sup>r</sup> Williams in Paris, which, when he had Completed, he returned, but without Dispatches, either Publick or Private that I know of, more than a Letter for M<sup>r</sup> Williams, desiring him not to detain Capt. Young; and as to you or your Brother not being inform'd of this Setting out I know nothing about it, no more than of Sir Geo. Grand's being sent to Versailles on publick business last Saturday. It is true, he call'd on Doctor Franklin & myself as he was setting out, & afterwards on his return; but I know of no publick business that he was charged with, except simply to shew Capt. Thompson's letter to the Count De Vergennes. The Americans who arrive here are their own Masters, nor is it Possible they should be ignorant of what you are pleased to say it would be but decent

for me to inform them. The Letter to Lord North will be copied this Evening & it is proposed to send off a Messenger with it tomorrow morning.

I remain, with much Esteem, Dear Sir, &c.,

SILAS DEANE.

Hon. A. Lee, Esq<sup>r</sup>

*Thomas Mss.*

TO SAMUEL WHARTON.

Paris, 11 Dec<sup>r</sup>, 1777.

DEAR SIR,—I send you inclosed N<sup>o</sup> 1 & N<sup>o</sup> 2, our Correspondence with Lord Stormont, which pray you to Publish. I have quoted the Notes by memory, but Doctor Bancroft has the originals or exact Copies; these are, however, sufficiently so for the Purpose. N<sup>o</sup> 3 & 4 are Letters from America which ought to have a place in your Publick Papers. The News Papers sent you contain much important intelligence & History, which you will use your Judgment in Publishing, either in exact Order as events happened or otherways. Should Doctor Bancroft be still in London he must take a part of the Trouble on him. We have wrote a Letter directly to Lord North on the subject of the Prisoners; what his answer will be cannot be foretold, but if in the same stile as Lord Stormont's, We shall also publish that, with an appeal to the Civilized part of the World. But as it may be still in his dispositions, as well as power, to make some Satisfaction, we shall wait. I say some Satisfaction, for adequate is impossible. Numbers of American Prisoners having actually Perished under the Cruelties they have been treated with. I think they might, with Propriety, N<sup>os</sup> 1 & 2, be published in Almon's Remembrancer.

I am, tho personally unknown, with Great Esteem, &c., &c.,

SILAS DEANE.

Samuel Wharton, Esq<sup>r</sup>

*Thomas Mss.*



FROM PAUL WENTWORTH.

9 O'clock, Paris, 12 Xbr., 1777.

A Gentleman who has some acquaintance with Mr. Deane wishes to improve it ; but, fearing objections to an unexpected visit, asks the favor of a private interview & rendezvous, or leave to appoint one. He will wait half an Hour Precisely for an Answer in His Coach, near the Barrier on the Quay, opposite the High Street, leading through Passy. He will attend the Exhibition of Luxembourg Gallery from 12 till one this morning, & go to Pot de Vin's Bathing Machine, on the River, at 6 this Evening, leaving a note for D. S., with the Number of the Room engaged. If neither of these appointments are Convenient, Mr. Deane is desired (if he should not be at home now) for send a note to A. B. C., at the Caffé du Foy, in the Gardens of the Palais Royal, before Six o'Clock this Evening, Naming the hour & Place of his own Choice. In the meantime, the strictest secrecy & Honor is expected.

*Stevens's Facsimiles, No. 719.*

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TO PAUL WENTWORTH.

Mr. Deane will be at his Lodgings, Rue Royale, to-morrow morning, at 10 o'Clock, where he will be glad to see anyone that has Business with Him. Mr. Deane will always treat every subject with the secrecy & Honor it merits.

Saturday Morning, 11 o'Clock. The moment of receiving the Billet dated 9 o'clock, Saturday morning.

N. B. If more Agreeable to the Gentleman to come to Passy, Mr. Deane will expect & wait on Him there Tomorrow Evening, at His Lodgings, as he will return to Passy tomorrow night ; but of this he must be informed, otherways he will wait upon Him as above.

*Stevens's Facsimiles, No. 719.*

## TO ARTHUR LEE.

M<sup>r</sup> Deane's Compliments to M<sup>r</sup> Lee, & once for all distinctly insists that when he has Complaints to make, he make them to the right Person. The Plan, &c., referr'd to by Capt. Jones, were never in M<sup>r</sup> Deane's hands, nor had he either the leisure or Curiosity to ask for them. M<sup>r</sup> Lee will recollect that he was present when his Brother resolved on delegating his Power as Commercial Agent to M<sup>r</sup> Mentandoin, without any Consultation with M<sup>r</sup> Morris, & why M<sup>r</sup> Morris has not the same Power is really very strange. It may not be prudent for the Commissioners to interfere in a department that belongs to others, but when that department is left by one & notoriously mismanaged by the other of the Agents, The Commissioners will not be guilty of any imprudence, in M<sup>r</sup> Deane's Opinion, if they advise an honest & industrious Man to accept the Commission offer'd him, & save something for the Publick. In regard to fixing an Hour, M<sup>r</sup> Deane has not the least Objection. It is well known that he spends few Hours any where but at Passy; to have certain Hours fix'd wou'd be a very great relief to him, & therefore he prays M<sup>r</sup> Lee to name the Days & Hours that are agreeable to him, & M<sup>r</sup> Deane will agree to them. M<sup>r</sup> Williams is well known to be a very prudent Person, & will not, it is presumed, make unnecessary Expences to the Publick. M<sup>r</sup> Deane cannot be insensible to the manner in which he has been treated in M<sup>r</sup> Lee's two last Billets, nor to the insinuations which have been for many months since made by M<sup>r</sup> Lee, respecting his conduct. This is not a Time to resent either the one or the other. M<sup>r</sup> Deane wishes not ever to do it, but in the mean Time, & once for all, urges M<sup>r</sup> Lee to have the Candor to Communicate to him in Person the grounds of his Jealousies & uneasiness; in which Case M<sup>r</sup> Deane pledges his Honor that Nothing on his Part shall be wanting to remove them. This certainly [is] a more honorable & just way, between equals at least,



than Private insinuations and threatening Billets, or Complaining ones.

Sunday, 2 O'Clock [Dec. 13th, 1777].

N. B. M<sup>r</sup> Moylan was recommended to L'Orient without consulting M<sup>r</sup> Morris, & I do not recollect any objection.

*Thomas Mss.*

FROM PAUL WENTWORTH.

Rue Royale, Paris.

SIR,—I could not be in Paris without asking the Honor of paying you my respects, especially as I shall be returning to London in a very little while, where you may have wishes to make me usefull, in which I shall be Happy if they promote Peace. I am, at present, at the Hotel de Vaubau, rue de Richilieu, and every where, Sir,

Your most H. Servant,  
P. W.

To Silas Deane, Esq.

Paris, the 15 Xbr, 10 o'Clock A.M.

*Stevens's Facsimiles, No. 719.*

TO CONRAD A. GERARD.

Mr. Deane has the honor of presenting his most respectful Compliments to Mr. Gerard; he was this Moment favored with his Letter. Mr. Deane will be at Passy Tomorrow, and, if agreeable to Mr. Gerard, will wait on him at Mr. Roy de Chaumont's House, at any hour he will fix. Mr. Deane has Reasons for desiring the Rendezvous to be at Mr. Chaumonts, which he will explain when he has the honor of seeing Mr. Gerard; but if another plan will suit Mr. Gerard better, he is at his orders.

Tuesday, 16 Decem. 1777.

*Stevens's Facsimiles, No. 763.*

TO CONRAD A. GERARD.

Mr. Deane's Compliments to Mr. Gerard, and will do himself the honor to call on him at his Hotel, precisely at five o'Clock this afternoon; his other engagements will not permit of any other hour this afternoon, & he hopes it will be Agreeable.

Tuesday, 16th Dec., 1777.

2 o'Clock.

Monsieur Gerard.

*Stevens's Facsimiles, No. 762.*

FROM NECKER DE GERMANY.

DEAR SIR,—As i am inclined to think that the last Success of the Americans against Generals Burgoyne and Vaughan, and those which may be expected daily against General Howe, shall occasion many toasts to the liberty and independance of united Provinces, good trade and friendship with France, and health, Glory, and Happiness to General Washington, i presume that the barrique of Claret which hath been send to you by mistake shall not be useless to you; and as i find much difficulty to introduce it again in Paris without paying a second time the duties, it would be very agreeable to me that you should be so kind to keep it for your own use; and if you agree with that i shall but pass to your account the cost of it, being £.345. 6, according to the inclosed note. As i am in the most impatient expectance of American news, pray be so good as to let me know instantly what you may learn about General Howe and Philadelphia, as well of the appearance of a revolution in the English Ministare.

I remain, with much regard, Dear Sir,

your most humble Servant,

Necker de Germany.\*

Paris, 16<sup>th</sup> Dec. 1777.

A Monsieur Deane, chez M<sup>r</sup> Le Roy de Chaumont à Passy.

*Thomas Mss.*

\* Senior partner of Germany, Girardot & Co., the bankers recommended to Deane by Robert Morris, in behalf of the Secret Committee of Congress.



FROM WILLIAM LEE.

Chaillot, 17<sup>th</sup> December, 1777.

SILAS DEANE, ESQ.,

SIR,—Your long card to my brother, dated Saturday, 2 o'clock, which has just been communicated to me, it is in some respects incumbent on me to answer, because it would be extreme folly in me to let it go forth uncontradicted to the world, that any *mistaking* or *misunderstanding* of my actions or words should be construed into any approbation, or in any manner countenancing *your* superceding the Secret Committee's appointment of their commercial agents. I must call it *your superceding* the Committee's appointment, because I am well informed that the letter to Mr. Williams for that purpose was signed by you alone. I am also informed that the correspondence since on the subject has been in your single name, tho' the style of *we* has been used in the letters, and I believe I shall not be contradicted in saying that Mr. Williams's letters in reply have generally been under cover directed to you solely. You say in your card to my brother: "Mr. Lee will recollect that he was present when his brother resolved on delegating his power as commercial agent to Mr. Montaudouin without any consultation with Mr. Morris." So strange and fictitious an assertion I am at a loss to account for, and it would be still more strange if my brother should recollect what *never* happened, and which I assert was never in my contemplation. 'Tis true that I applied to all the three Commissioners when present, not to any one singly in a corner, stating the propositions I had made to Messrs. Montaudouin, of Nantes, to undertake the public commercial business of America, on terms which I knew were more advantageous to America than any that had been proposed by any other house; at the same time observing that I had no power to compleat this engagement without the concurrence of Mr. Morris, who I was apprehensive, from his attachment to another house, would not agree with me in opinion, and desiring in that case the

advice of the Commissioners how I should act. *You* immediately proposed that the Commissioners should interpose and suspend Mr Morris, for without that, in your opinion, Messrs. Montaudouin could not undertake the business in any shape; another of the Commissioners observed that the question was not about suspending Mr. Morris, but whether Mr. Lee should not appoint a proper person to act in his stead. To this I made no reply, and there the conversation ended. In consequence I afterwards informed Mr. Montaudouin personally that I was not vested with sufficient authority in my own person to conclude such an engagement, but that I would represent his obliging willingness to serve America to the Secret Committee, who I did not doubt would be happy in such respectable correspondents.

With respect to Mr. Moylan, I did not send him to L'Orient. I thought Mr. Moylan a capable and deserving man, and therefore promised him all the aid and support that I could personally give him, and at the same time advised him to endeavor to obtain Mr. Morris's approbation also, that we might cordially intrust to his care the management of any public business that was under our joint control. I also wrote Mr. Williams, in answer to a letter from him on the same subject, that if he and Mr. Moylan could agree between themselves, any aid I could give to forward the business successfully should not be wanting. This shows that tho' Mr. Williams had been made the instrument of a personal injustice to me, I bear him no ill-will on that account.

Had the joint letter of Mr. Morris and myself, early in August, or my own letter to you of the 28th of August (which in course of post would reach you the 31st of August), been favored with any answer, the length of this might have been perhaps unnecessary. I had always understood that every gentleman had a right to expect an answer from another to a civil letter, but my late experience teaches me I am not always to



expect that civility. However, I must take the liberty of recapitulating some facts relative to your superceding the Committee's appointment of commercial agents. You know that I was appointed by the Secret Committee, in conjunction with Mr. Thomas Morris, commercial agent for the affairs of America in France. You know that I left England to take upon me that office, and arrived in Paris early in June, where I remained several weeks under your advice, being then a total stranger to the powers and authority vested in me by the Committee, having never had any information on the subject by letter or otherwise. In July, without saying one word to me, you wrote to Mr. Jonathan Williams, to take upon himself the sale of prizes made by Continental ships of war, to give orders accordingly to ye commanders of Continental armed vessels, and, also to superintend the management of such armed vessels; in consequence of which Mr. Williams, with the aid of a Frenchman, got possession of one or two prizes, which I believe at this moment have not been accounted for to the public or other proprietors—at least, I am sure they were not when I left Nantes in October last. Mr. Morris, as was his duty, remonstrated against this order, and sent you an extract of the Secret Committee's orders on the subject. Still there was no alteration on your part, and I was permitted to go to Nantes the beginning of August without one syllable being mentioned to me about the business. In August Mr. Morris and myself wrote a joint letter from Nantes, requesting this order might be withdrawn, at the same time sending a copy of the Secret Committee's instructions to us on the subject. This letter has to this moment remained unanswered. Early in October, when I came to Paris from Nantes, I personally applied to all the Commissioners present, to recall that order to Mr. Williams, stating the mischiefs that had already arisen from it to the public interest, and fairly saying that I could not intermeddle with the commercial

affairs of America until that was done. A promise was made that the order and appointment of Mr. Williams to supercede Mr. Morris and myself should be immediately withdrawn, as the Commissioners had no authority whatsoever to control the Secret Committee's appointment of commercial agents; yet so far from this promise being complied with, Mr. Williams writes thus from Nantes, the 6 December, 1777, and addressed "The Hon<sup>ble</sup> Commissioners of the United States:" "You have never recalled your order to me relative to the management of the ships of war, prizes, etc." Here is an unequivocal proof that the promise solemnly made of recalling these orders two months before had not been complied with. Who Mr. Williams supposes to be the Hon<sup>ble</sup> Commissioners of the United States I do not know, but it is evident he cannot mean Mr. Lee to be one, because he never received such orders from him. On the contrary, Mr. Lee has ever disavowed such orders and the authority of the Commissioners to interfere in such matters. This when fully considered is really a very curious business. A vessel comes from the United States of America, expressly addressed to William Lee and Thos. Morris, as their agents; when Mr. Jonathan Williams, as agent of Mr. Deane, expresses his dilemma whether he ought not, under Mr. Deane's appointment, take the management of this vessel out of the hands of Mr. Lee and Mr. Morris.

On the same principle, Sir, I should suppose that, whenever you think it convenient, you have as good a right to order your servant to take my coat off my back and put it on his own. These are facts that I can hardly suppose will be controverted, and it is these facts that have determined me not to interfere any further with the commercial affairs of the Committee 'till their pleasure is known; and I should think myself very deficient in my duty were I not to state the case very fully to the Committee, and leave it with them to determine as they please on the occasion; for the motives



of my conduct being public good, much more than private emolument, where I can't do real service I will do no injury, which might possibly be the case were I in this country at this critical juncture publickly to assert the rights that are vested in me ; and that is the reason why I pass over in silence, with Christian forbearance, the personal injustice and injury that has been done to me. It is a matter of perfect indifference whether this letter meets with the same fate of silence and disregard that my others have, but I must desire it may be kept, as I mean it to be a formal and written protest against any one of the Commissioners, or the whole together, undertaking to supercede the Secret Committee's appointment of their Commercial Agents. I beg it may be remembered that the merits or demerits of Mr. Williams are totally out of the question ; 'tis undue exercise of a power with the shadow of authority in superceding the Secret Committee's appointment of their Commercial Agents, and without assigning any reason for such procedure, that I complain of. I should suppose that in candor, when you mention that one of the Agents has left the business, you should mention also the reasons which induced him to do so, which it is not probable you were unacquainted with before. However, you now have them from under his hand. I have endeavored to express myself clearly and fully, and I hope with decency ; therefore have only to add that

I am your obed't humble servant,

WILLIAM LEE.

*Ford's Letters of William Lee, p. 288.*

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TO JONATHAN WILLIAMS.

Paris, Dec<sup>r</sup> 18<sup>th</sup>, 1777.

DEAR SIR,—I have put off writing from Day to Day, untill I find it Necessary for Capt. Nicholson to go over to Nantes. My advice is that he transact his affairs with as much Secrecy as the nature of the Case will admit of, & you can, after you have concocted

your plan, send him directly over to L'Orient to wait the arrival of the Vessels at the place of Rendevous, and his final Orders. My Brother will write you by Capt. Nicholson. I wish his Goods may, if possible, sail with him. I have no time to write M<sup>r</sup> Dorsey, but pray you to let him know that the Commissioners have no funds for the Payments of Wages that may be due from the Congress, and Consequently they cannot comply with his request. All in their Power is to grant such relief as is absolutely necessary to persons who have the misfortune to be made Prisoners. The Commissioners tho't they had done this for M<sup>r</sup> Dorsey. If more is necessary, he must apply in that way. I hope you will be able to procure a Freight for my Brother's Goods in Montieu's Vessels, if there is room over the Goods of the Public. I am, &c.,

SILAS DEANE.

M<sup>r</sup> Williams.

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO JOHN ROSS.

Paris, Decem<sup>r</sup> 18<sup>th</sup>, 1777.

DEAR SIR,—You will receive a Letter from the Commissioners respecting Capt. Green, also a Letter from my Brother on another subject, on which I have only to say that he will punctually fulfill his Engagements. I say this as you are a Stranger to him. I hope that Cap<sup>t</sup> Green will be well provided, & you may depend, by one means or other, we shall form such a force as not to be scarcely in the probability of being attacked. As soon as he sails, you will acquaint me with the Dispositions you have made as to the Freights, &c., and with the amount of the outfitts. I this moment received a Letter from Cunningham. He was at Corruma the 27<sup>th</sup> Nov<sup>r</sup>, doing very well, having got Liberty to sell his prize openly, & was pushing out on a fresh Cruise. I have received no Letter from you this three Weeks past. Depend upon it, Our affairs are in a good Train on both sides of the



Water, and I most sincerely Congratulate you on the late Events. Hodge has not wrote me one word since he left us ; my Compliments to him. I will write him particularly by my Brother, who will undoubtedly set out for Nantes.

I am, &c.,

SILAS DEANE.

M<sup>r</sup> Jn<sup>o</sup> Ross.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO WILLIAM MCCREERY.

Paris, 20 Decem<sup>r</sup>, 1777.

DEAR SIR,—I most sincerely congratulate you on the good News from America, & the very favorable prospect of our Affairs. M<sup>r</sup> Carmichael left with me, this day, six Continental Notes of five hundred Dollars each, which I hold at your Orders, also a Receipt of M<sup>r</sup> Chaumont's for one of five hundred Dollars. If you will permit me to advise you, it would be to place these Notes in the Hands of some monied House here in France, with your own Security as Collateral for payment of principal & Interest regularly. By this, you may, I think, raise the Money for present use, & it is my Opinion that the Credit of the Congress will so rise soon that you may be intirely quit of any further Trouble on the Subject ; at least you may do much better this way than by any Discount you can offer, and as Discount, after all, is very disagreeable. I would at this Instant, had I Money, sooner speculate in the American than in any other Funds. Please to give me your Orders as to these Notes, & note me the price of Tobacco, Rice, & Indigo at Bordeaux.

I am, with most sincere Esteem,

Dear Sir,

Your most Obed<sup>t</sup> Serv't,

SILAS DEANE.

W<sup>m</sup> M<sup>c</sup>Creery, Esq.

*Thomas Mss.*

To ——— Le MOYNE.

Paris, 22<sup>d</sup> Dec<sup>r</sup>, 1777.

DEAR SIR,—The bearer, who will go by the Name of Samuel Darcy, will have the Honor of waiting on you with this. I have only to assure you that, should he by accident be in want of money at Bourdeaux, his Bills drawn on me, payable at M<sup>r</sup> Grand's Banker in Paris, will be honored and paid to the amount of Two hundred Louis D'Ors, as he shall have occasion for.

I have the Honor to be (tho' unknown), with the utmost respect,

Sir, your most Obed<sup>t</sup> & very humble Serv<sup>t</sup>,

SILAS DEANE.

Mons<sup>r</sup> Le Moyne,  
Bordeaux.

*Thomas Mss.*

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN TO JONATHAN WILLIAMS.

Passy, 22d December, 1777.

DEAR NEPHEW,—You need be under no concern as to your orders being only from Mr. Deane. As you have always acted uprightly and ably for the public service, you would be justified if you had no orders at all; but as he generally consulted with me and had my approbation in the orders he gave, and I know they were for the best and aimed at the public good, I hereby certify you that I approve and join in these you have received from him, and desire you to proceed in the execution of the same.

B. FRANKLIN.

To Jonathan Williams.

*Bigelow's Works of Franklin, X, 343.*

TO CONRAD A. GERARD.

Paris, 24th December, 1777.

SIR,—Mr. Bancroft returned last Evening from London, but brings nothing more of News from



America than what has been already published. The Ministry on their part had quieted the minds of the People by answering them that immediately on the meeting of the Parliament, a Plan would be laid before the House for a Peace with America. On the other side the leaders of the Opposition had united, and the dispute between them and the Ministry appeared to be chiefly who should make the Peace, as much or more than how it should be made. The Report was that both the General & Admiral Howe would be recalled, that General Amherst would be sent over, and that other Commissioners would be sent. The Opposition were trying to get the Commissioners named out of their Body, and proposed among themselves General Conway, Mr. Walpole & Col. Barre, which would be taking one out of each leading party. The Ministry in the meantime were expressing their wishes that some advances should be made on the part of America. In this Situation of Affairs the Nation seemed easy in the expectation that by one way or the other it would certainly be settled. It was certain that the Sum to be borrowed at the meeting of Parliament would be Eight Million Sterling, whilst the subscribers to the last Loan had not paid up their subscription.

That the Ministry would not permit any private Letters from America to be delivered, not even the Letters of Lord Howe & of the General to their Families and Friends, but kept everything as Secret as was possible. This was as near as he could obtain it the present disposition at London, where he was obliged to keep himself Secret, but had Opportunity of seeing several Leaders of the Opposition, who gave him this Account, & added that the Minister had engaged to obtain, if possible, some propositions from America by way of their Commissioners in France before the meeting of Parliament, in January. This agrees with the Application already made, with which I had the honor of Acquainting his Excellency and yourself. This intelligence I did not think of very great importance, and

therefore have sent it out in the Ordinary way, that you may communicate it to his Excellency the Comte de Vergennes, to whom I pray you present my most profound Respects. I have the honor to remain, with the utmost Esteem,

Sir, your most Obedient  
and Very Hum<sup>b</sup> Serv<sup>t</sup>,

SILAS DEANE.

*Stevens's Facsimiles, No. 766.*

TO CONRAD A. GERARD.

Paris, 26<sup>th</sup> Dec<sup>r</sup>, 1777.

DEAR SIR,—I send you inclosed a Letter, which was received last Evening. As th Captors of the two Ships confiscated at Nantes have urged for an appeal from the judgment of the Admiralty, & as they have suffered greatly in their time as well as stores whilst waiting in hopes of finally recovering them, we wish, if his Excellency the Comte de Vergennes has no objection to the measure, that we may have the liberty of an Appeal, & that the ships may be detained until final issue can be obtained. We hope the proceeding will not be deemed improper. The Original owners we know had no Expectation of recovering those Ships, & as their obtaining them was in consequence of a judgment of the Admiralty, which is a Court from which appeals may be regularly made, we presume no objection can be made against it by the Claimants. But, as I before mentioned, the whole is submitted to his Excellency's determination, which we pray may be taken as early as the nature of the Case will admit of. I have the honor to remain, with the utmost respect,

Sir, Yours, &c.,

SILAS DEANE.

M<sup>r</sup> Gerard.

*Thomas Mss.*



TO MESSRS. CRIPPS AND MAYO.

Paris, 26<sup>th</sup> Dec<sup>r</sup>, 1777.

GENTLEMEN,—This will be handed to you by M<sup>r</sup> Downer & M<sup>r</sup> Marck, Gentlemen who come out on Commercial affairs. They have good Connections here, & in Consequence of the Sollicitations of a Capital House, I have taken the Liberty to introduce them to your acquaintance & Civilities. Hoping that their Voyage may be at once profitable to themselves and of service to your state, & that your future connections may increase to mutual advantage, I have the Honor to be, &c.,

SILAS DEANE.

Mess<sup>rs</sup> Jn<sup>o</sup> S. Cripps & Mayo.

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TO MESSRS. DELAP.

Paris, Decem<sup>r</sup> 26<sup>th</sup>, 1777.

DEAR SIR,—Yours of the 19<sup>th</sup> we received yesterday, & immediately inclosed it to Monsieur De Sartine in a Letter of ours, & have not the least Doubt that Justice will be immediately done. The part you have acted merits our Thanks & Justice to you, and requires that we should represent it to our Friends in America, which we shall do in our first Dispatches. You on the Spot are & must be the best Judge what steps are proper to be taken, on consulting with the Persons best acquainted with the proper Mode of proceeding, & you may rely on us to support you in the Measures necessary for the obtaining the Liberty of Cap<sup>t</sup> Walker & such Justice as is his due, & may, at the same time, prevent in future such impertinent & insolent Conduct. To the other parts of your Letter we cannot so particularly answer, as it is not now before us, but will, if found necessary, write you again by the

next Courier ; mean time we are, with the most sincere Esteem,

Sir, Your most Obed<sup>t</sup> hum<sup>e</sup> Serv<sup>ts</sup>,

B. FRANKLIN,

SILAS DEANE.

Mess<sup>rs</sup> Delap.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO JONATHAN WILLIAMS.

Passy, 27<sup>th</sup> Decem<sup>r</sup>, 1777.

DEAR SIR,—I have no time to be particular on the several Letters you have favored me with, as this goes off at a moment's warning, & if it has the good Fortune to arrive before the actual Departure of the two prize ships, they will be detained, & an appeal must be instantly enter'd. M<sup>r</sup> Chaumont will write every thing necessary to Mons<sup>r</sup> Monturidain, & I know I need say nothing to you to urge your Exertion on the Occasion; to save if possible these two ships, after all that has passed, will be a master stroke & give me pleasure as long as I live, as I am sure it will you & every American. The Appeal will not only be made against the Judgement of the Admiralty, but also against the subsequent disposition of them. They must, of Course, be detain'd for Tryal, & I hope for a favorable Issue. Possession, you know, is said with us to be Eleven points of the Law, & I have no doubt we shall gain the Twelfth in course. The final Orders to Cap<sup>t</sup> Nicholson & the other Vessels will be with you in two or three days after this. My Brother has left with me a power to give the Directions necessary to Cap<sup>t</sup> Fogg. I am glad to hear that he has so good a Vessel, & only wish she may arrive safe in America. I am, with Sincerity, D<sup>r</sup> Sir,

Your most Obed<sup>t</sup> & very D. Serv<sup>t</sup>,

(S. D.) SILAS DEANE.

M<sup>r</sup> Jon<sup>o</sup> Williams.

*Thomas Mss*



TO MESSRS. EMERY.

Paris, 27<sup>th</sup> Decem<sup>r</sup>, 1777.

GENTLEMEN,—Yours of the 11<sup>th</sup> should have been replied to before this, but I have found myself distracted with Business every moment that I have [not] been able to attend to it ; but this stands as my Excuse in room of the very many Apologies which are due on the apparent Inattention, for I can never be guilty of Neglect tow<sup>ds</sup> Gent<sup>n</sup> I so highly esteem & whose Civilities to my Brother have laid me under such particular obligations. I most sincerely thank you for the Interest you take in what concerns my Country. It is the part of generous minds like yours to take the part of the stranger, & the oppressed in every occasion, & I have no doubt but the Conduct of the Americans will be such as to deserve yours & the Esteem of all the World. M<sup>r</sup> Carmichael left Paris since my receiving your Letter. He is very sensible of your Civilities to him when at Dunkirk & grateful for the kind remembrance you have of him. He left Paris on a very short Notice, or he would have wrote you. I hope your Ships will arrive in safety, for I am confident that what ever tends to encourage your Commerce with America will be at once for your advantage & that of the people in America. We have no news from America since what has been made public.

I have the Honor to Remain, with much Esteem,

Gent<sup>n</sup>, Your most Obed<sup>t</sup> & very h<sup>e</sup> Serv<sup>t</sup>,

SILAS DEANE.

Mess<sup>rs</sup> Emery pere & fils.

*Thomas Mss*

TO FRANCIS COFFIN.

Paris, Dec<sup>r</sup> 27<sup>th</sup>, 1777.

DEAR SIR,—I have the Honor of several of your Letters, to which I should have answer'd sooner, but have been in daily hopes of seeing Cap<sup>t</sup> Hill, who is at

last arrived. I have before me five of your Letters, of the 29<sup>th</sup> Nov<sup>r</sup>, of the 2<sup>d</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, 12<sup>th</sup>, & 19<sup>th</sup> Inst. You will have found, by M<sup>r</sup> Grand, that due [attention] has been paid to your Draught. I have not the least doubt but that you have conducted every thing upon the best plan which the nature & situation of our affairs would admit. The travelling of sailors from Dunkirk to Nantes, by Land, must, you are sensible, be at once fatiguing & expensive, & I really wish it could be avoided, & I doubt not that some Method will be fallen upon by the Commissioners to avoid it in future. At the same time I feel much for them, & can easily conceive what their Fears & Apprehensions must justly & necessarily be after escaping from the most barbarous of men. I must ask you in future to address your Letters to the Commissioners jointly, Messrs. Franklin, Dean, & Lee, & that your Accounts of Disbursements & Draughts be made in that Stile.

I am, with much Esteem,

Sir, your most obed<sup>t</sup> & very h<sup>c</sup> Serv<sup>t</sup>,

SILAS DEANE.

You forgot to inclose the names of the officers & sailors mention'd in your last.

M<sup>r</sup> Francis Coffyn, Dunkirk.

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO MESSRS. VIEUS AND MORRELL.

Paris, Decem<sup>r</sup> 27<sup>th</sup>, 1777.

GENTLEMEN,—It is some time since I did myself the Honor of writing to you, as I concluded M<sup>r</sup> Grand informed you of what passed here. I sent him, the other day, a Letter from Cap<sup>t</sup> Cunningham & one from his Hostage, to be forwarded to you, which I hope came duly to hand, & that no further Disputes will arise about the Ransom Money. The Hostage owns that he is well treated. I wish we could say as much for our Prisoners in England. That he will



have his Liberty on the money being paid, the Rules & Customs of Nations at War in such cases are well known. By them we shall regulate our Conduct in this affair, & it is to no purpose for the Agent to expect any other mode of proceeding. The whole affair is exceeding simple: the Hostage is held for a certain sum; that sum paid, he shall be at Liberty to dispose of himself as he pleases, but to give other security is out of all Rule, and the Demand, to say no more of it, is extravagant. I can but hope the affair will be settled without further Difficulty. I am extremely sorry for the Trouble given you on this occasion, & wish it could have been averted. I shall ever be happy in hearing of your welfare. My Brother has left Paris, & I am not certain of his returning before he sees America. He, as well as myself, have a grateful sense of your Civilities to him during his stay at Dunkirk.

I am, w<sup>th</sup> much Esteem,  
 Gen<sup>n</sup>, Your most obed<sup>t</sup> &  
 very hum<sup>e</sup> Serv<sup>t</sup>,  
 SILAS DEANE.

Mess<sup>rs</sup> Vieux, Morrell & fils,  
 Dunkirk.

*Thomas Mss.*

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FROM JOHN ROSS.

Nantes, 27<sup>th</sup> Decem<sup>r</sup>, 1777.

The Hon<sup>ble</sup> Silas Deane, Esq<sup>r</sup>

DEAR SIR,—Since mine of 23<sup>d</sup> Inst., to which crave refferrance, have not had any of your favours; neither has your Brother made his appearance as yet. Holy days retards our operations here, a most horrid inconsistency & detriment in a Country to give way to such damnable, pernicious customs. I fear the Labrune will not get her Cargo on board this approaching week, from this circumstance; hope nevertheless she will get ready to sail with the others, nor need you

doubt my anxiety & attention to forward every thing in my power for the purpose.

Captain Jones, who delivers this, I find has some dependance on the Commissioners for a Vessel of some considerable Force, capable of enabling to prosecute certain Expeditions for the Service of the United States. If there should really be a desire & ability to forward this business, on the plan & expectations of the Navy board, I think the present good humour of their Court might be improved on the occasion by Soliciting a purchase of one of those new constructed, large Frigate fashion Ships, which is calculate to carry 32 Eighteen pounders. If you succeed, you must contract to have her compleately fited in the King's own yard for Sea, and delivered when ready at such place as may hereafter be fixed on, either off the Coast or about the Canary Islands. A Bargain on this plan may be conducted with the utmost Secressie, & reduced to a certainty as to time of delivery, &c., engaging at same time the liberty of keeping a certain number of French Sailors in the Ship after your Captain gets command. You'll find Capt. Jones a very intelligent man, more so, in my opinion, in the Line of his profession, than any you have had to visit you as yet of our Continental Captains. He is possessed of the full confidence of the Board; cou'd you therefore put him in such Ship as might answer his pursuits (not pecuniary objects), am persuaded something very honourable to the United States might be derived from his Cruize.

I hope, nevertheless, you'll soon determine whither or not any thing is to be done for Captain Jones, that he may not be detained at Paris trifling away time. Ships of Force, in War time, Laying in Harbours, incurs a heavy, unavoidable expence, without Benefit or reputation to those concerned as proprietors & Commanders. The Ranger will be fited & ready for Sea as soon as those you propose to Sail together, and it being impossible to provide immediately for Capt.



Jones. It may be proper to finish & conclude on what is to be done, that he may return to proceed on a Cruize, & Join the Convoy, to see them clear of the European Seas at Least. I have this far taken the liberty to give you my own sentiments, in case it tends in any degree to forward your views & the service of the Country. Let me only further add, that I am, with particular respect & regard,

Dear Sir,

Your very obedient Serv<sup>t</sup>,

J<sup>N</sup><sup>o</sup> ROSS.

*Thomas Mss.*

To ——— DESEGRAY.

Paris, 28<sup>th</sup> Dec<sup>r</sup>, 1777.

DEAR SIR,—I proposed to my Colleague the sending some person to the different ports, as well to examine into the state of prisoners, as on other Subjects, which, not having been determined upon, has occasion'd the Delay in answering your Favors of the 28 ult<sup>o</sup> untill now; with respect to the Seamen who arrive, if there are no Continental Ships at S<sup>t</sup> Malos or L'Orient, they must be sent to Nantes in the least expensive manner. I wish to know what sum will answer Capt. Baker's wants; his Letter was given to D<sup>r</sup> Franklin, who possibly may have omitted answering of it; meantime, what is wanting for his & Lady's immediate necessities must be supplied them, as well as for the American Woman, but it is necessary we should be informed how she came to France, from what part of America, & what may be her Character; you will please, in your answer to this, to send an acco<sup>t</sup> of the sums paid Americans & the names of the persons who have rec<sup>d</sup> the same. I have the Honor to be, with much Respect & Esteem,

Sir, Your most Obed<sup>t</sup> & very h<sup>c</sup> Serv<sup>t</sup>,

SILAS DEANE.

Mons<sup>r</sup> Desegray.

*Thomas Mss.*

To ——— JANZE.

Paris, Decem<sup>r</sup> 29, 1777.

DEAR SIR,—I should have given you my advice earlier on the two Ships you mention as fitting out, but on Acco<sup>t</sup> of the uncertainty where Gen<sup>l</sup> Howe's Fleet may Winter. If you send to New England you can sell your Cargoes well, but cannot find articles to make your returns in so as to bring back all your Cargo carried out, & Tobacco seems to be the almost only article that every one is runing after. In this situation I would advise you to go either for New England, that is Boston or Ports<sup>o</sup>, or New London, or for S<sup>o</sup> Carolina; sell your Cargos to the best advantage & purchase such Goods only as you can make a Freight upon for return; for Instance, if in New Eng<sup>d</sup>, Masts, Flaxseed, potash, &c., will pay a freight; if in S<sup>o</sup> Carolina, purchase Rice, peltry or Furr<sup>s</sup>. Indigo will not answer; but you will ask what is to be done with the Ballance of your Cargo. You must lend it to Congress & take their Notes at 6 pr Cent Interest, & you can always pass those Notes when you want to lay out your Money. This is the best plan I can think of, & is a plan that many are going upon; as to my writing a number of Letters to America by every Vessel that goes, it is really a Task that I am not able to go thro' with, consistent with my other affairs. The taking of Philad<sup>a</sup> is nothing of any Consequence. I am, with due Esteem,

Sir, your most obed<sup>t</sup> Serv<sup>t</sup>,  
 SILAS DEANE.

M<sup>r</sup> Janze, Merch<sup>t</sup>, Bordeaux.

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO ANDREW LIMOZIN.

Paris, 29<sup>th</sup> Decem<sup>r</sup>, 1777.

DEAR SIR,—Your favors of the 20<sup>th</sup> & 26<sup>th</sup> to my Brother I duly rec<sup>d</sup>, as they came to hand during his absence; he left us about 8 days since on Business, &



will not probably return to Paris before he visits America, where he purposes establishing himself at Petersburg, Virginia, by the Firm of Simeon Deane & C<sup>o</sup>. Your Favors to him, should you send that way, will greatly oblige me, & you may be sure of the utmost attention & Fidelity on his part. With respect to engaging to take an Interest in the Brig you mention, I can say nothing, as he left me no Orders, & I apprehend his Engagements are already equal to his Funds here. The chest you mention he would have sent to Nantes to the care of M<sup>r</sup> Williams, & as he went away in haste he mention'd to me something of a parcell of Goods you had purchased, which were intended to have been sent by Folger to B. Deane, Esq.; pray give me answer to this; let me know the state of those goods. I am surprised to hear it should be reported that D<sup>r</sup> Franklin had given orders to M<sup>r</sup> Holker to purchase Goods, &c., on the Credit of a War; permit me to assure you the report is groundless, but it is true that the Common Opinion at Paris is, that there will be a War very soon, & monied men are in Consequence speculating. This is all that I know of the matter, & am confident that M<sup>r</sup> Holker's speculations rest on the same footing as others, the apprehension of a War, but by no means the Certainty. I am, with much Respect, Dear Sir,

Your most Obed<sup>t</sup> & very H<sup>e</sup> Serv<sup>t</sup>,  
 SILAS DEANE.

M<sup>r</sup> Limozin.

*Thomas Mss.*

FROM ROBERT MORRIS.

Manheim in Pennsylv<sup>a</sup>, Dec<sup>r</sup> 29<sup>th</sup>, 1777.

SILAS DEANE, ESQ<sup>R</sup>.

DEAR SIR,—I wrote you everything I had to say relative to that unhappy young man who has so unworthily involved us in a dispute, & shall now proceed to tell you that I rec<sup>d</sup> some time since your Letters of the 26<sup>th</sup> May, with Copies of two of the 11<sup>th</sup> April, to all

which I should have replied had not the constant train of alarms in which we were kept all the Summer, the hurry & confusion I was consequently involved in when obliged to remove from Philad<sup>a</sup>, & my unsettled situation since, prevented it, &, indeed, put it out of my power to attend to any thing but the object immediately before me. It is needless, at this time, to reply to the Political Parts, & with respect to your recommendation in fav<sup>r</sup> of the Marquis De la Fayette & others, I have been as attentive to them as was in my power; but I confess my abilities in this way have been vastly reduced from what was the case in times of peace. I could then command some little time for attention to Friends or Strangers, but for two years past little time has been allowed me, even to reinvigorate nature by refreshing sound sleep. I believe the Gent<sup>l</sup> became sensible of this & gave me peace. The Marquis de la Fayette is really a fine spirited young Noble Man; he is very happy with Gen<sup>l</sup> Washington, who is fond of him, & by being in the Family he is pretty well guarded against those impositions you feared. I have supplied him with what money he asked of me, & now remit his Draft to M<sup>r</sup> Ross. I have done the same with the Marquis de La Rouarie, to whom you also gave unlimited Credit; his drafts are on Mons<sup>r</sup> Beaumarchais, & I doubt not both will be paid. Your Letter of the 1<sup>st</sup> Oct<sup>r</sup> on Commercial matters is now before me, & I will reply what is necessary to its contents. Altho I find my Brother's Conduct has justified M<sup>r</sup> Bromfield's censures of it, & thereby taken off the keen edge of my resentment, yet I continue to think that if, instead of spreading such acc<sup>ts</sup> where he went, he had wrote me an acc<sup>t</sup> of what he knew, it would have been much more meritorious; I should have believed him if he had then written, & he would have guarded me against the snare I fell into; but instead of that & in telling Tales (as I thought much exaggerated) in Virg<sup>a</sup>, & saying not a word on the subject to me, altho he wrote to me,



& you had referred me to him for particulars, seemed very extraordinary & rather confirmed those suspicions that had been raised. However, M<sup>r</sup> Bromfield is now in No. Carolina, & in a late letter I hinted how little I thought myself obliged to him. He got into some dispute with Carter Braxton, Esq<sup>r</sup>, of Virg<sup>a</sup>, respecting a purchase of Tob<sup>o</sup>, & they agreed to make me Umpire in it. This I have declined, because I am at so great a distance, & still more because I am interested in the dispute. Surely they may find plenty of proper persons near the scene of action to judge fairly between them. Cap<sup>n</sup> Roche & M<sup>r</sup> Bromfield have conducted the business committed to them in such manner as they judged best. They have been assisted, however, by my friend Jn<sup>o</sup> Dorsius, Esq<sup>r</sup>, in Charlestown, who offered to pay Capt<sup>n</sup> Roche the L<sup>vs</sup> 100,000 for your part & mine, on the latter asking that Question when he first arrived. They loaded Capt<sup>n</sup> Roche's ship back with rice, &, I suppose, or hope, one or two others have been sent from N<sup>o</sup> Carolina with Tob<sup>o</sup>. If the returns are fortunate enough to arrive safe, this voy<sup>e</sup> must turn out to fine acc<sup>t</sup>, & instead of being in want of money to pay y<sup>r</sup> & my share, we shall each have a considerable sum to receive. I confirm what I formerly wrote on this subject, that if I fell in debt for my Concern in this adv<sup>r</sup>, my friend Jn<sup>o</sup> Ross will pay the Ball<sup>e</sup>. On the contrary, if there is any thing coming to me, let it be paid to him. With respect to the Powder Cons<sup>d</sup> us by M<sup>r</sup> Diant, of Martinico, on acc<sup>t</sup> of Mons<sup>r</sup> Le Ray de Chaumont, it arrived in June last at Alexandria, when the price being no more than 3/9 pr lb., I refused to let it be sold, & kept it stored for a long time. Congress were then well supplied, & I was fearful of bringing it up to Phil<sup>a</sup>. These Circumstances have kept this matter long depending, & I expect only to receive final acc<sup>ts</sup> respecting it in a Post or two, when I shall make out the acc<sup>t</sup> & write M<sup>r</sup> Chaumont fully respecting it. I never knew anything more of the concern with M<sup>r</sup>

Delap in a Brig<sup>t</sup> or Snow, than what you mention in a Copy of a Letter the 11<sup>th</sup> April, & in this of the 1<sup>st</sup> Oct<sup>r</sup>, but having perfect Confidence in you I am well satisfied to pay my part of that loss. I shall write to M<sup>r</sup> Ross to that effect, also. If your Brother, on his return to Virg<sup>a</sup>, writes to me so that I may know how to direct to him, I shall correspond with & render him any service in my power. I fancy from M<sup>r</sup> Delap's silence, he has lost confidence in me, & I am not much surprized. The Conduct of my Brother, the reports circulated in London to ruin our Credit, & one or two of my former Correspondents enquiring of him after our Effects to secure the Ball<sup>ces</sup> due to them, were sufficient reasons; but then I should have liked it much better if he had wrote us & told us not to expect any thing from him than to observe a perpetual silence whilst I was procuring him Consignm<sup>ts</sup> & making some to him myself. Its true they have been unfortunate, but my intentions were in his fav<sup>r</sup>. Unluckily I committed to my Brother the Care of settling all our dependancies in England, gave him orders to draw for money due us, & to pay what we owed. I have not yet heard whether he has done one or the other, & am therefore taking measures to enable my Partner, Mr. Willing, to do it. He has remained in Philad<sup>a</sup>, & on that acc<sup>t</sup> we have agreed to dissolve our Partnership, but these old affairs must be settled. Should my Brother have drawn for the Ball<sup>ces</sup> due us & missapplyed them, We shall be in a pretty Box, now that it is so extreamly difficult & hazardous to make remitt<sup>ces</sup>. If he has drawn for one & paid the other, or if he has neglected these affairs totally, all will be very well, as there is more money due to us in England than we owe; besides these Dependancies, I had made my Brother, & the House he connected himself with, some consignm<sup>ts</sup>, & directed an application of the n<sup>t</sup> proceeds. Amongst the rest, he was to pay you £1000 St<sup>g</sup> towards Capt<sup>n</sup> Bell's ship, but neither he or you have lately said one word on that matter, & I



really do not know whether he paid you the money or whether there is such a Ship or not. I expect, however, there is, & by this means request my friend Ross to assume the management of my part. The Ball<sup>e</sup> that remains from my Consign<sup>ts</sup> with T. M. or the House may perhaps be hard to come at, but I shall try for it, & hope M<sup>r</sup> Ross may be able to assist as to the Public. I think they will not dare to withhold any thing belonging to them, as that may bring [out] an application to the Court of France. I dare say you will see [blank] into the various Scenes of distress, vexation & mortification this unhappy Headstrong man has plunged me into. Nothing but a consciousness of the pureness of my own intentions would ever enable me to become easy under it, & I fear it will be very long (if ever) before that will be entirely the case.\* I wrote you a few Lines the 9<sup>th</sup> Aug<sup>t</sup> last, & wish you may have rec<sup>d</sup> them, as they would shew you that I was still y<sup>r</sup> friend, how different so ever might appear that unfortunate Letter of the 29<sup>th</sup> June. In due time I shall expect to see you in America, & promise myself we shall meet on too good terms to admit of any further fending or proving. I considered you as a suffering man, but it was contrary to my judgement & inclination that you are so, & therefore had no hand in it. Hereafter I hope to be usefull, for you may depend I do not want the will, altho I may fail in the ability. I am returned to my Family at this place upon leave of absence from Congress, in order to settle this Winter the affairs of my House, & to mind my own a little after such long neglect of them.

Adieu, my D<sup>r</sup> Sir ; I remain, with much affection,  
Your Obed<sup>t</sup> & most hble Serv<sup>t</sup>

ROB<sup>t</sup> MORRIS.

*Thomas Mss.*

\* In the Laurens Correspondence, Moore's Materials for History, p. 71, is a complete and painful acknowledgment from Morris of his error in regard to his brother.

TO JOHN RUTLEDGE.

Paris, Dec<sup>r</sup> 29<sup>th</sup>, 1777.

DEAR SIR,—M<sup>r</sup> Montieu, a Gentleman of this City, who has greatly exerted himself in sending out supplies to America, informs me that he sent but the last year, by M<sup>r</sup> Lastergette [Lasugette], a Quantity of Fire Arms, which M<sup>r</sup> Lastergette was obliged to sell at a Cent advance, tho' he might have sold them for much more in Georgia or elsewhere at private sale. The profits of a Cent was justly consider'd by your hon<sup>d</sup> Assembly or Council, who fixed it, a very generous price in itself consider'd, but when specie was not to be had in the Country, nor Bills of Exchange, except at a most extravagant exchange, & when the only article the Effects of the sale would be vested in for remittance had rose to more than double its usual price, a considerable loss was inevitable. By the Calculation he has shewn me, he will not receive in France more than thirteen Livres for what cost him Twenty-three or four here. Were it in Consequence of the common Chances in Commerce, the Cases would be such that he would have no right to complain; but, as he looks, in Consequence of having been obliged to sell them at a price below what could have been had for them elsewhere, he is very uneasy, & has prayed me to represent to your Excellency the particulars of the affair, to which I am indeed a stranger further than I have rec<sup>d</sup> it from M<sup>r</sup> Lastergette. It may be tho't strange that Goods selling at a Cent profit should lose a Cent of the principal in Returns, but it is really so, & if not remedied must stop any Trade at all between Europe & America. A Fusee, for instance, costs 24 Livres here, is order'd to be sold at 48 Liv<sup>s</sup> in Carolina. The freight and Insurance of that Fusee was at least 6 Livres, w<sup>ch</sup> brings it to cost him 30 in Carolina. Indigo being the only article which returns of considerable value can be made in, he purchases for his thirty Livres three pounds of In-



digo, which is the most he can get, or suppose, for the whole 48, the Gross sales, he purchases  $4\frac{1}{2}^t$ . The gross sales of this in France will not exceed 27 or 28 Livres, out of which, when you deduct the Insurance out and back and Freight, it will not leave him more than about 12 Livres for his Fuzee. I am sensible that this is occasioned several ways, & that the Legislature are not by any means to blame for it. The only thing perhaps possible is to let Trade have its Course without the least Interposition. The Buyer & Seller will then make their Calculations, & one thing will rise in proportion to another, if not instantly, yet in a very short time. If in your power to grant this Gent<sup>n</sup> any relief in the above, I doubt not of your readiness to do it.

I have the Honor to remain with much Esteem,  
Your Excellency's most Obed<sup>t</sup> & very hum<sup>e</sup> Serv<sup>t</sup>,  
SILAS DEANE.

His Excellency,  
John Rutledge, Esq<sup>r</sup>.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO MESSRS. CORNIE.

Paris, Decem<sup>r</sup> 30<sup>th</sup>, 1777.

GENTLEMEN,—We have to thank you for the Account you gave us of Cap<sup>t</sup> Johnson's Escape, & should have acknowledged the same sooner, but were in hopes it would have been confirmed by his Arrival; but unhappily your Intelligence was premature, & he unhappily remains still a prisoner. In Behalf of Doct<sup>r</sup> Franklin & self, I am, with much Respect,

Your most Obed<sup>t</sup> & very h<sup>e</sup> Serv<sup>t</sup>,

SILAS DEANE.

Vere M<sup>on</sup> Cornie & M<sup>r</sup> Fils.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO MESSRS. ROCQUETTE AND ELSIERIER.

Paris, Decem<sup>r</sup> 30<sup>th</sup>, 1777.

GENTLEMEN,—Your Favors of the 1<sup>st</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Inst. are before us, & would sooner have been replied to, but

we were in hopes to have rec<sup>d</sup> the Samples of Indigo  
 referr'd to in yours of the 1<sup>st</sup>. They are not arrived.  
 We are not, however, the less sensible of your kind-  
 ness, & for the Intelligence given us of the Qualities  
 of Indigo, & at the same time of the price of several  
 Articles of the produce of our Country. Any service  
 towards increasing the Commerce of America with  
 your Port, you may depend we shall be ever ready to  
 give whenever in our Power. I have the Honor to  
 remain, in Behalf of D<sup>r</sup> Franklin & myself,

Gent<sup>n</sup>,

Your most obed<sup>t</sup> & very h<sup>c</sup> Serv'ts,

SILAS DEANE.

Mons<sup>r</sup> J. Rocquette, A. Elsierier & C<sup>o</sup>,  
 Rotterdam.

*Thomas Mss.*

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WILLIAM CARMICHAEL TO ARTHUR LEE.

Jan. 3, 1778.

Mr. Carmichael presents respectfull compliments to  
 Mr. Lee, and informs him that, being disappointed of  
 getting to America in the manner He expected, Mr.  
 C—— will not quit Paris 'till Tuesday morning, when  
 he will set off for Nantes. If Mr. Lee has any further  
 commands, Mr. Carmichael will charge Himself with  
 them, with pleasure.

Hotel De Vauban, Rue de Richelieu,  
 Saturday, 6 o'clock, afternoon.

*Lee Papers, Harvard University.*

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TO JONATHAN WILLIAMS.

Paris, January 3<sup>d</sup>, 1778.

DEAR SIR,—I have before me no less than five of  
 your Letters unanswered—three to my Brother and  
 two to myself. The three former are dated 20<sup>th</sup>, 23<sup>d</sup> &



25<sup>th</sup> ulto., the latter 25<sup>th</sup> & 27<sup>th</sup> Respecting the former it is rather a matter to be determined by the whole of the Commissioners than by me. I am, however, fully of your Opinion, and as I presume you have received Doctor Franklin's Letter respecting the Interdict which a certain Gentleman was pleased to lay me, or rather you, under, as to receiving advice or orders from me, I presume you will still venture, under such authority, to Correspond with me & pay your usual regard to my advice & Directions. Thus much for yours of the 25<sup>th</sup> In answer to yours of the 27<sup>th</sup>, I shall, before the closing of your accounts, procure a friend for you to draw on for the 20,000 Liv<sup>s</sup> paid to M<sup>r</sup> Ross, & hope you will give as long a Draught as you well can for my Brother's Interest in the other adventure. I am glad to find by yours of the 20<sup>th</sup> so good an account of the Brig, & hope she may arrive safe. I presume you will before this have received a much larger quantity of goods for my Brother, & I fear you may be obliged to take out more salt. Let me intreat you, my Dear Sir, to get, if possible, the whole of the goods which may arrive at Nantes belonging to him to sail at the same time with Capt. Nicholson, even if part of the Salt should be thrown overboard, if no other Vessel can take in any part of them. Inclosed you have a Bill of Lading and Invoice of Goods shipped by Horneca, Fitzeau & C<sup>o</sup>, of Amsterdam, which must be shipped to my Brother by the same Vessel or some one that accompanies Capt. Nicholson if possible. You must take the Bill of Lading consigned to S. Deane & C<sup>o</sup>, or to Barnabas Deane, Esq<sup>r</sup>, in his absence, or to their order. I send you a copy of an account of Monthieu's for the Magazine \* amounting to 6,416 Livres, which is paid; also the account of the goods shipped from Holland, which pray you to have forwarded by Capt. Fogg. I have delayed in writing to you some days on account of constant Expectation that an Express would set out for Nantes. This comes by that, & incloses a

\* Rent due Monthieu for a storehouse at Nantes.

Letter to Capt. Fogg, which I pray you to deliver to him. I am with much Esteem, Sir, your most obed<sup>t</sup> & very Humble Servant,

SILAS DEANE.

Accept my Compliments of the Season.

To M<sup>r</sup> J. Williams.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO LIEUTENANT BOUX.

Paris, 3<sup>d</sup> Jan<sup>y</sup>, 1778.

SIR,—We have wrote Capt. Nicholson, who will procure you a Passage to America, & we hope it may be such a one as will be agreeable. Inclosed you have a Letter for the Hon<sup>ble</sup> the Marine Board, which you will send to them & attend their future orders. Capt. Nicholson will give you notice where to meet him, or the Ship in which you can have a passage.

We are wishing you much Success, Sir,  
Y<sup>rs</sup>, &c.,

B. FRANKLIN,  
SILAS DEANE.

L<sup>t</sup> Boux.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO JOHN ROSS.

Paris, 3<sup>d</sup> Jan<sup>y</sup>, 1778.

DEAR SIR,—Your favours of the 23<sup>d</sup> & 27 ult. I duly received, & should have replied sooner but from the daily expectation that a Courier express would set out. He is still delayed, & for aught I know may be a day or two longer. I approve much of your sentiments as to Vessels of War expressed in yours of the 27<sup>th</sup>, & most sincerely hope it may be soon in our Power to put something of consequence in Execution. For some time past, and even at present, I find difficulties on every side; want of independent Funds, want of Bold, Spirited Protection, with many other Items of the kind,



clog & weigh us down whenever we would attempt any thing of consequence. I have the highest opinion of the merits of Capt. Jones & of his active zeal for the service. Believe me, Sir, he shall not trifle away a moment's time at Paris on any account; but, tho' my whole time is Devoted to Business, at the same time I must necessarily give attendance to that which first & most immediately presses, especially in proportion to its importance. I am glad to find that Capt. Green will be ready with the other Vessels, & depend you will make the necessary regulations on that subject. Capt. Nicholson will be ordered for Boston or Portsmouth, in New England, the Commissioners judging those to be the most certain Ports under the present situation of Affairs. I am very sorry to find that M<sup>r</sup> Hodge has been ill, but hope it is only some sudden turn which the News of the taking of Philadelphia may have had on his spirits. He is a worthy, honest, plain young man, & I really love & esteem him. I shewed your Letter on the subject of Cunningham's Cutter to M<sup>r</sup> Lee, but as yet have no answer. I thank you most sincerely for your kind hints and cautions; they are just, they are seasonable, & come, I am sure, from a heart which wishes me well and is anxious for my present situation. I have not been regardless of the gathering clouds, & have long since known that what can be done will be done against me; yet should it so happen that these men should be victorious, rest assured that their Victory will finally prove their ruin & public Disgrace. At least I will never take measures to counteract them, which would make me appear little in my own Eyes, & little I must be when put on their Level. I send you inclosed a Letter for M<sup>r</sup> Hodge; if you know his direction send it to him. My last Letters from Spain mention that Cunningham had taken several Prizes, & sold them in the Ports of Spain without difficulty. The Commissioners may or may not agree to the proposal I made you & M<sup>r</sup> Hodge; it is for them to determine immediately. The subject is properly laid before them,

& of course I am clear of any blame in it, let it be delayed or not. We are in hopes dailey of receiving news that the troops & militia to the South have exerted themselves & put Gen<sup>l</sup> Howe on a footing with Gen<sup>l</sup> Burgoyne, but at this moment we are really destitute of News of almost any kind that may be relied on. You must excuse my not answering your several Letters earlier, & accept of the present, if not as a payment in full, at least as being on account.

I am, &c.,

SILAS DEANE.

M<sup>r</sup> Ross.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO WILLIAM HODGE, JR.

Paris, Jan<sup>y</sup> 3<sup>d</sup>, 1778.

DEAR SIR,—I am much affected with a Letter received from M<sup>r</sup> Ross, in which he says you are too much out of Health to write to me. I suppose this is in consequence of the News of the taking of Philadelphia. I cannot blame you for being sensible of such an event, especially as it is your native City, & your Friends are all settled there, & the Idea of their Distress, or removing or being made prisoners, must affect you. It is not in Nature to resist those feelings, but it is the part of a brave Man like you not to sink under them. I know you will not unless your Health fail you, therefore take Care of that, & as that depends much on your Spirits, always hope for the best. You know well I have my desponding hours; you will therefore take my Advice, as being of the greater Importance, having been often in the same situation. Gen<sup>l</sup> Howe is undoubtedly by this time drove out of the City or made prisoner with the Army. I think we may depend on this. Inclosed you have a Letter received from Lisbon, which I opened, not knowing from whence it came, & supposing it might possibly bring us some News. You will forgive my Freedom in this Instance. We are without



any News from America since the first of November, when the Fort on Mud Island & that on Red Bank held out, which obstructed the Communication between the Army & Fleet of the Enemy. If they have held out one Month longer, they will certainly have finished. M<sup>r</sup> Howe's affairs, as well as those of M<sup>r</sup> Burgoyne's, were compleated. I understand that Cunningham is doing very well, which gives me pleasure. I have had Letters from him down to the beginning of last month, & I hope to get the Ransom money of Six hundred guineas, as the objections heretofore made seem now to be out of the way. My Brother is gone for America, & will be very happy to see you in Virginia to compleat the affair about which you had some Conversation here. Pray let me hear from you, if possible, wherever you may be; & if I can, in any Situation of Life, be of Service to you, it will give me the greatest pleasure. I am,

Dear Sir,

Your most Obed<sup>t</sup> Humb<sup>e</sup> Ser<sup>t</sup>,

SILAS DEANE.

M<sup>r</sup> Hodge.

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO CAPT. ——— FOGG.

Paris, Jan<sup>y</sup> 4<sup>th</sup>, 1778.

SIR,—In addition to the Orders sent you by my Brother, I have to advise you to keep under the Convoy of Capt. Nicholson quite to America if possible. If found impracticable either on account of contrary winds, storms, or his being attacked, in that case you are to make the first safe port in New England; if you fall in farther to the Southward, the first safe port in North Carolina. On your Arrival, secure the Goods & Vessel, and immediately acquaint my Brother of your Arrival & Situation. You'll enquire for him by the name of Simeon Deane & Co., at Petersburg, Virginia. You will also enquire for him of John King & Co., of that

place, also of Messrs. Norton & Beale, in Virginia. Should he by any accident not be arrived, send Express to my Brother Barnabas Deane, Esq<sup>r</sup>, of Wethersfield, Connecticut, & follow his Directions. I am wishing you a good Voyage, Sir,

Your most Obedt. humble Servt.,  
 SILAS DEANE.

Capt. Fogg.

*Thomas Mss.*

To ——— LASTERGETTE.

Paris, Jan<sup>y</sup>. 4<sup>th</sup>, 1778.

SIR,—I committed a mistake the day before you left Paris. I wrote you several Letters, among the rest one to Sir George Grand & one to you. By mistake that to Sir George Grand was directed to you & that for you to him. I inclosed the Letter to President Rutledge in the Letter you received, & am surprised that your perceiving the mistake had not asked an explanation before you set out. This makes me fear that you possibly might not have received my Letter. Pray, by the first Post, explain it to me. I am wishing you a good voyage. Dear Sir,

Your most Obed<sup>t</sup> hum<sup>bl</sup> Serv<sup>t</sup>  
 SILAS DEANE.

Mon<sup>s</sup> Lastergette.

*Thomas Mss.*

To CAPT. SAMUEL NICHOLSON.

Paris, 4<sup>th</sup> Jan'y, 1778.

SIR,—I send you a Packet for Col<sup>o</sup> Harrison of Virginia, which pray you to deliver with your own hand if you can; if not, send it on by some safe person—by Mr. Carmichael if he takes his passage with you. I have nothing particular to add, as we have no News of



any kind, but most sincerely wishing you all possible success, I am, Dear Sir,

Your most Obed<sup>t</sup> Humb. Ser<sup>vt</sup>,  
SILAS DEANE.

P. S. There is also one for M<sup>r</sup> Hancock, which treat as the other.

Capt. Sam<sup>l</sup> Nicholson.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO ROBERT MORRIS.

Paris, Jan<sup>y</sup> 4<sup>th</sup>, 1778.

DEAR SIR,—I send you by Capt. Nicholson a Duplicate of what I wrote you by my Brother, who I hope will arrive in Safety. Capt. Nicholson will explain to you personally the Cause of his having been delayed, & as he is an intelligent as well as Gallant officer, I need not be particular on that subject. Mess<sup>rs</sup> Delap undoubtedly informed you of an adventure in the Brig Timoleon, in which he interested you one third, which failed. The adventure with Capt. Roach was successful in getting out, but we are still without any returns, & I have given my obligation for the whole of the outfits, amounting to one hundred thousand Livres. In this situation I have judged it prudent to make insurance, & M<sup>r</sup> Chaumont has accordingly ordered the interest to be covered, so that we may not be losers at any rate. If the adventure return safe, the gains will be very handsome, & more than compensate for the misfortune in the Timoleon. While engaged in public affairs, I find it impossible to attend private adventures, as our Correspondence as Commissioners is very extensive, & applications of one nature and another very numerous. I hope, however, in a few weeks to see American Independance acknowledged, after which I shall ask Liberty to quit Politics forever, & put myself, if possible, into a situation to enjoy what of Life may be left me in some degree of care, in attending solely to my own affairs, which have been for several years neglected. I

have made myself acquainted with all the principal houses in Europe, as well as with its manufactures & commerce, & am of opinion I can be of more service to my country, my friends, & self in that than in any other department. I have no ambition of being at Courts; I have seen enough of them to ease me of any such Passion, though I have the honor of all the Esteem & Confidence I wish for with the Minister for Foreign affairs, with whom our Business lies, & who, I think, is a very honest as well as able minister. We are without News since the last of October, & are anxious for your situation. I hope Capt. Nicholson's New Frigate will prove a valuable acquisition to our Navy. I pray my best compliments to M<sup>rs</sup> Morris, & believe me ever your sincere friend & very Humb<sup>e</sup> Serv<sup>t</sup>,

SILAS DEANE.

Hon'ble R. Morris, Esq<sup>r</sup>

*Thomas Mss.*

TO JONATHAN WILLIAMS.

Paris, Jan<sup>y</sup> 4<sup>th</sup>, 1778.

SIR,—This will be given you by Capt. Hill, late a Prisoner in England. If any Business offer, wish he may be provided for, as he appears a worthy, Deserving man; if no Business offers, procure him a Passage in Capt. Nicholson or any one of the other ships, & furnish him with such necessaries as are really necessary, taking his receipt therefor, accountable to the hon'ble Congress. Inclosed you have the Receipt for the Sums I have advanced him, which please to inclose in a Letter to the Congress. I am, &c.,

SILAS DEANE.

M<sup>r</sup> Williams.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO CAPT. SAMUEL NICHOLSON.

Paris, Jan<sup>y</sup> 4<sup>th</sup>, 1778.

SIR,—You have inclosed a seal for my Brother, Simeon Deane, which I pray you to take the Charge



of, & send it to him on your arrival in America. You will in case of Capture treat it as belonging to you, and fix it to your Watch. You will find my Brother at Weathersfield, in Connecticut, or Petersburg, in Virginia. I am, Sir, &c.,

SILAS DEANE.

Capt. Nicholson.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO SIMEON DEANE.

Paris, Jan<sup>y</sup> 4, 1778.

DEAR BROTHER,—I send you your Seal by Capt. Nicholson. I paid three Louis eighteen Livres, for which I have charged your account. He will wear it as his own in case of being taken, by which means it may be saved. Nothing new has arrived since you left us. I hope to send you the chief of your goods, and also the account of them. I am, Dear Brother,

Your most Obed<sup>t</sup> & very Hu<sup>b</sup>le Serv<sup>t</sup>,

SILAS DEANE.

Simeon Deane, Esq<sup>t</sup>

*Thomas Mss.*

TO CAPT. SAMUEL NICHOLSON.

Paris, 5<sup>th</sup> Jan<sup>y</sup>, 1778.

SIR,—My Brother, going away in great haste, possibly forgot to give your Orders respecting the Articles he desired you to carry out for him. You will receive it of M<sup>r</sup> Williams, &, if you have no other Directions, you will, on your Arrival in any Port of New England, put it into the Hands of some person of Confidence, & immediately inform my Brother, Barnabas Deane, Esq<sup>t</sup>, of Wethersfield, Connecticut, where it is. I say inform him, for it will be probable that my Brother Simeon Deane will be gone to the Southward. If by accident you go the Southward with your ship, you will find him at Petersburg, Virginia, by enquiring of Mess<sup>rs</sup> John

King & Co., of that place. I am ever your Friend & most Obed<sup>t</sup> Serv<sup>t</sup>,

SILAS DEANE.

Capt. Nicholson.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO EDWARD BANCROFT.

DR. SIR,—I am obliged to return instantly to Versailles. Will be back by Two O'Clock at Passy, & will lodge this Evening Rue Royale. Let me see you very early Tomorrow Morning or This Evening. Mr. A. L. must be shaved & bled, or he will be actually mad for Life. Adieu. Thursday Morning.

P. Forth is set off express for London, exclaiming loudly at his being deceived. He set off yesterday morning.

[Thursday, Jan. 8, 1778.]

*Stevens's Facsimiles, No. 490.*

TO MESSRS. GERADOT AND HALLER.

Passy, Jan<sup>y</sup> 8<sup>th</sup>, 1778.

GENTLEMEN,—I received yours of the 8<sup>th</sup> this inst. I had before replied to yours respecting the first of Saunder's Draughts. I must now add decisively that I cannot accept any of them, or suffer them to be accepted on any account. The other Bills with your Letter were received by D<sup>r</sup> Franklin & shewn me yesterday, since which I have been from home until this moment. As to the Bills drawn by M<sup>r</sup> Gourlade & Mess<sup>rs</sup> Morris & Lee, I wait only to have an opportunity of seeing M<sup>r</sup> Lee that he may explain the reason of their refusal. He is now in Town; but in the mean time you may rest assured that we shall not suffer the Bills to be returned Protested. I will do myself the honor of waiting on you in the course of tomorrow on the subject. M<sup>r</sup>



Williams, of Nantes, has drawn 4 Bills on my Brother at 2 usance. They are for

|      |   |                       |
|------|---|-----------------------|
| 1500 | } | 9000 Liv <sup>s</sup> |
| 2000 |   |                       |
| 2500 |   |                       |
| 3000 |   |                       |

in favour of M<sup>r</sup> Bilnard de Roullay, which I have accepted on his Behalf, & Desire they may be placed to my account. I have the honor to be, &c.,

SILAS DEANE.

Mess<sup>rs</sup> Gerardot & Haller, &c.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO ARTHUR LEE.

M<sup>r</sup> Deane's Compliments to M<sup>r</sup> Lee, and prays to see him at his house, rue Royale, this Evening at Six O'Clock, or seven if more agreeable. M<sup>r</sup> Gerard prays to see the Commissioners together at that place, & will come to them solely for that purpose this Evening.

Thursday, 8<sup>th</sup> Jan<sup>y</sup>, 1778.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO JAMES MOYLAN.

Paris, Jan'y 9<sup>th</sup>, 1778.

DEAR SIR,—I received yours of the 2<sup>d</sup> last Evening, & am much obliged to you for your Service to my Brother. I hope it will be in his Power to return you like good offices. He sailed the beginning of this month for America, & hope he will arrive in season to transact the Business. If not, the House of Messrs. John King & Co. have engaged to do it for him, & their House is of very good Character in Virginia. We have no Intelligence from America except what comes thro' England, which comes down to the 10<sup>th</sup> of November from New York, when there was no Confirmation

of the taking Mud Island. I have seen a New York paper as late as the 15th, which says nothing more than that such a report prevailed. If any Intelligence arrives at L'Orient from America which is interesting let me know it by Express. I ask this as the Despatches from America have generally gone round by Nantes, & have travelled thence moderately up to Paris. In ordinary cases this is well enough, but in such an Instance as the News of Burgoyne's Defeat it is of Importance that we should have the earliest Intelligence possible. I have the Honor to be, with much Respect,

Sir, your most Obed<sup>t</sup> Humb<sup>e</sup> Serv<sup>t</sup>,

SILAS DEANE.

M<sup>r</sup> Moyland.

*Thomas Mss.*

MESSRS. BERARD AND FRERES.

Passy, 12<sup>th</sup> Jan'y, 1778.

GENTLEMEN,—M<sup>r</sup> Beaumarchais shewed us your Letter of the 7<sup>th</sup> Inst., by which we find that you had not so much Confidence in the Commissioners as to deliver the Cargo of the Amphitrite to their Order untill your Disbursements on the two Frigates should be paid you. On our part tho' were greatly surprised at the amount of those Disbursements, as well as the prices of particular articles charged; yet we accepted & discharged your Bills, relying on your Honor that if any Error should appear in the Accounts it would be rectified by you. We must think that the Correspondence between us ought to have inspired greater Confidence or never to have existed at all. We are, with due Respect, Gentlemen, Yours, &c.,

B. FRANKLIN,  
SILAS DEANE,  
ARTHUR LEE.

Berard & Freres.

*Thomas Mss.*



TO CONRAD A. GERARD.

SIR,—You did me the honor to promise a Letter to M<sup>r</sup> Chaumont as soon as a determination should be taken respecting the Convoy. As no Letter has been received, conclude that it is still undetermined. M<sup>r</sup> Chaumont has authentic Advice that Four or Five sail of English Men of War are actually at Anchor in the Road of Belle Isle, waiting, undoubtedly, to intercept Our Vessels. In this Situation of Affairs it is impossible to put to Sea without being taken unless protected by the French Flag. We have therefore prayed M<sup>r</sup> Chaumont to wait on You, and to learn what is the final determination on this Subject, as it is certain very wrong information has been given. I have the honor of inclosing to you a Copy of Our Commission Authenticated. On the other Subject, it may be more proper that we should explain Ourselves in a personal Conference than by Letter, which we wish to have an Opportunity of doing as early as may be agreeable. I most sincerely wish you a happy New Year, & have the honor to remain, with the utmost Esteem, Sir, your most Obedient & very hum<sup>b</sup> Serv<sup>t</sup>,

SILAS DEANE.

*Stevens's Facsimiles, No. 767.*

TO CONRAD A. GERARD.

Silas Deane's Answer.

Question. What is necessary to be done immediately so to satisfy the Congress and the People of America with the Utility and Certainty of the Friendship of France and Spain in securing their Independence that they also will reject all Propositions from England for Peace inconsistent with that Independence?

Answer. The Commissioners think that an immediate engagement on the Part of these Kingdoms to

guarantee the present Possessions of the Congress in America, with such others as they may acquire on the Continent during the War, and either to enter into a War against England or to furnish the Congress with Money (if they do not) to carry on the War untill a safe Peace can be obtained, and untill all that the English now possess on the Continent shall be conquered, which will be necessary both for the weakening of their Power and for securing the Fisheries to the United States and their Allies ; And that the Treaty containing Engagements to this Effect be directly communicated to the Congress.

If France & Spain, or either of them as Auxiliary, would furnish us with a Fleet of Six or Eight Sail of the Line, or more, this would give the Congress & the People of America the most certain Prospect of a favorable and speedy End of the War to their full Satisfaction, and prevent their listening to any Accommodation or Terms short of absolute Independency.

January 11th, 1778.

*Stevens's Facsimiles, No. 796.*

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FROM THE COMMITTEE OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS.

York, 12th January, 1778.

GENTLEMEN,—Not having received any letters from you since the 26th of May, we were severely chagrined yesterday upon the arrival of Captain John Folger, who, under the name of despatches from the Commissioners at Paris, delivered only an enclosure of clean paper, with some familiar letters, none of which contained any political intelligence. You will see by the within examination of Folger that he was by no means a discreet person, fit to have charge of what you trusted to him ; but we cannot yet prove that he was wilfully connected with the robbers of the packet. The paper referred to by the letter A, in the examination, was a plain cover to plain paper, which had been put in the place of an



enclosure, probably very interesting, sent with the public ledgers to R. H. Lee.

We shall endeavor to find whether the roguery was committed after Folger left France, but we must depend upon you to trace the circumstances from the time of your sealing till that of his embarking.

Congress have sent to Governor Caswell to explain the part he is said to have taken in the affair, and to examine the ship captain and the two passengers. Should the Governor confirm Folger's narrative, so as to make his veracity less problematical than at present, his confinement may be rendered easier to him, but he must not be quite discharged till we hear from you. There ought to be the greatest caution used with regard to the characters of all those persons who are confidentially employed by you. The connexion which Folger has had since he left America with persons in England, and on the voyage to Falkland's Isles, cannot be thought favorable to our interest, if his own family and native place are so. We shall only add, on this subject, that Folger, upon recollection, asserts that the largest packet delivered to him at Havre de Grace was directed "Despatches for Captain Folger," and he laments that he did not himself open it before he sailed. If this circumstance is true it accounts for Governor Caswell's opening the packet.

We are, with much regard, &c.,

J. WITHERSPOON,

J. LOVELL.

To the Commissioners at Paris.

*Diplomatic Correspondence, Amer. Rev., I.*

[Enclosure.]

The examination of Cap<sup>t</sup> John Folger, of Nantucket, taken before M<sup>r</sup> Lee, M<sup>r</sup> Harvey, M<sup>r</sup> Duer, M<sup>r</sup> Dana, M<sup>r</sup> Lovel, 12<sup>th</sup> January, 1778.

The examinant left Nantucket Sept. 4, 1775. Went from thence to England as mate of a vessel, of which

Cap<sup>t</sup> Shubal Worth was commander; arrived in London in about five weeks. The vessel was sold in London to M<sup>r</sup> Dennis de Bert, from whence she sailed December 6 following with the same captain, & the examinant still mate, on a whaling voyage to the Brazils, but was taken at the Cape De Verd Islands by the Portuguesse; & this examinant remained at the Cape De Verd Isles, the vessel being sent to Lisbon, where she was acquitted. From the said isles this examinant sailed in the ship Nancy, Captain J<sup>s</sup> Scott, belonging to Francis Roach, on a voyage to Falkland Islands; was upon monthly wages on board said vessel. Left Falkland islands Feby, 1777; arrived in England the beginning of May. From England he went to Holland, 1<sup>st</sup> June, 1777; arrived there 3 days after. His intention in going to Holland was to go to France, whither he did not choose to go directly. He went immediately to Havre de Grace from Holland. His view in going to France was to get into American employ. Called on M<sup>r</sup> Deane at Paris; had no letter to him. D<sup>r</sup> Franklin a distant relation of his. D<sup>r</sup> Franklin asked him whether he inclined to take a privateer. He told the Doctor he had never been concerned in the working of cannon, & therefore could not take the command of a privateer. Saw a M<sup>r</sup> Lee, but not D<sup>r</sup> Lee, at Paris; D<sup>r</sup> Lee was gone to Prussia. They desired he would be still until they could determine what part of the French coast he should go to. Was in Paris 18 days, leaving it July 15. It was concluded that he should go to Havre to view the Pacifique, which the Commissioners intended to buy; he reported her very deficient, & she was not purchased. About the 20 of July, Cap<sup>t</sup> Hinson came to Havre, & he was jointly to view the Pacifique. Remained at Havre for two months in the employ of the Commission. After the vessel was given up he sent word by M<sup>r</sup> Silas Deane's brother to the commissioners that he should tarry for further instructions. About the 9 of October he received a letter from M<sup>r</sup> Deane desiring him to take the command of a



swift sailing vessel intended to go with dispatches to Congress. He received with the letter a packet for Congress. He found at Havre a sloop, in which he arrived in America. He did not know the person who brought the letter from M<sup>r</sup> Deane with the packet. He lodged at Madame Moreau's, in which one Haley, her son in law, also lodged. The house was near the water, upon the pier. He eat with Haley & his family. Captain Hinson lodged in the same house. The person who brought him the packet told him where the vessel lay. Hinson, Haley & Examinant always eat together in a common room, but had each a chamber to themselves to sleep in. The chambers were not locked. On the arrival of the person from Paris, examinant was abroad, so the person was told to call in an hour. The person, when he came again, desired the examinant to write his name, which he did, on which the person gave him the letter & packet, & gave Cap<sup>t</sup> Hinson another about the size of the letter directed for him. The messenger could talk little English. The examinant read his letter to Hinson, who, after reading his own letter, asked the examinant what he determined upon. The examinant told him he intended to come, upon which no more passed upon the subject. After receiving the packet he directly locked it up in his trunk in the chamber where he lay, & believes his trunk was not opened by any person but himself. He gave a receipt to the Messenger for five packetts. One was marked "dispatches," wrapped in brown paper, sealed in two or three places, tied with a string; no wax over the string, no impression on the seals. A packet sealed, with no directions, was also delivered. He thought it further instructions to him, & broke it open; found it contained two letters, one for M<sup>r</sup> Hancock & the other for Richard Henry Lee, Esq<sup>r</sup>. Another packet directed to Barnabas Deane of Connecticut; another to the same, which was only a plan of Paris. Gave a receipt, mentioning only the number, without describing the packetts. The 5 packet was news-papers, covered in

the same manner with the rest, but had no direction. He broke it open before he knew what it was. The papers in the cover marked A were enclosed between the newspapers directed to Richard H. Lee. He opened the packets on the road from Wilmington to New Bern, about 28 miles. The Wrapper contained two packetts, both of which he delivered to Col. F. Lee last night. This packett got wet by a bottle of spirits in his saddle bags. No packet directed to R. Morris, Esq<sup>r</sup>. Moved his trunk & the papers in it from his lodgings at Havre on board the vessel. Cap<sup>t</sup> Errico was the commander of the sloop in which he sailed from Havre. She was cleared out for S<sup>t</sup> Domingo, & manned with Frenchmen ; Two Passengers—a Frenchman, Boileau ; a German, Pittnier. The examinant lay in a separate cabbin, & took great care of the chest in which the papers were. He informed the captain & the mate that he had dispatches for Congress ; the passengers knew it. He never mentioned at Havre his having these papers to any one but Hinson. He took a boat at a town three leagues below Wilmington (North Carolina), & brought his trunk to Wilmington on the 21 of December. He landed at the first town on the 20 of Dec<sup>r</sup>, was ashore three or four hours, had his keys in his pocket, left his trunk in the vessel ; the whole of the papers were put in a canvass bag & tied up at Havre de Grace, where he put weights in it in order to sink it. The bag was not disturbed from the time of his leaving Havre until his arrival at the town below Wilmington, except once, on the passage, when he opened it & took out the plan of Paris, which was under cover, directed for B. Deane. He lodged at Wilmington at one Cap<sup>t</sup> Hinson's, who kept a tavern, where he remained four days ; had a room to himself, where the trunk & his chest lay ; no key to his room. He sold all the things he could not bring in his saddle bags at public auction, having no more than 5 crowns which he brought from France. The next day after his arrival at Wilmington he took out the iron weights. He left Wilmington the



24 Dec. last. He did not examine his bags until he got 28 miles from Wilmington. He there examined them, & found M<sup>r</sup> Lee's packet not as above; the main packet not in the same end of the saddle bags. He broke open none but that one only which was wet. Within eight miles of Newbern he met with Gov<sup>r</sup> Casswell on the 26 Dec<sup>r</sup> & two other gentlemen, one a Col. Alcott. They interrogated him so closely that after some time he told them he came from France in a French vessel, the captain of which was a stage behind, on his way to see His Excellency, upon which one of the gentlemen told him that was his Excellency, pointing to Gov<sup>r</sup> Casswell, whom he did not at first know. They all lodged at the same house that night. He shewed Gov<sup>r</sup> Casswell the letter he had from M<sup>r</sup> Deane, which he shewed to the President. He desired the Governor's passport, which he procured, marked B. & C. He asked his Excellency, not knowing whether he might not suspect him, as M<sup>r</sup> Dean's letter was unsigned, whether he had a mind to see his papers; took out the main packet directed Dispatches, & did not think of his breaking it open; were in a private room together. The Gov<sup>r</sup> broke it open; the examinant informed him it never had been broken open before. After he had broken open the 3 seals with which the wrapper was sealed, he run over the superscriptions of the letters, & saw to whom they were directed. He resealed the packet marked dispatches, putting into it the same letters. When the Governor saw the blank paper he said he was surprised, & did not know the service of sending clean paper so far. The examinant answered he was surprised, & did not know he had clean paper under his care. They both assisted in repacking the letters, & the next morning the Governor gave him the passes. The passengers he left at Wilmington selling some goods they had brought. Boileau talked of coming into Virginia. On the road he found the covering of the large packet wet by rain, & then he wrapped it up in a piece of brown paper, unsealed, having torn off the original wrapper, but put

on no direction at all. Arrived in York Town about 3 O'Clock yesterday afternoon; put up at Steaks's, shifted himself, & then went to deliver his letters. He mentioned to some persons at Steaks's that he had letters for Congress, but did not stay to sit down before his going out to deliver them. Had no verbal or other message to whom to deliver the packet marked "dispatches." Never saw M<sup>r</sup> Deane after he left Paris, or ever received any letter or message from him but the letter sent with the packets delivered to the President of Congress. He came passenger in the sloop from Havre. On his arrival at Wilmington in Cap<sup>t</sup> Hinson's house, where there were several in company, he enquired for a continental agent, for he had goods for Congress. He was told, if You have goods for Congress, that is your man; the person who told him pointing to a gentleman then in the room. He informed the person he wanted his assistance. He shewed him the letter from M<sup>r</sup> Deane, & as it was not signed & interlined in one place, he would not give him any money or assistance, upon which the examinant told him he should inform Congress unless he would supply him; shewed him also the joint letter from M<sup>r</sup> Deane & D<sup>r</sup> Franklin.

Question. How did You know to whom You were to deliver the letters or packetts given You at Havre, without directions. Answer. I was governed only by my own judgment, which was that they were to be delivered to Congress. He opened no paper in France; of this he is sure. Did you open the paper marked A? I did not. Had the seal any impression when delivered to You? It had not. The wax run by holding it to the fire to dry. Had You any particular orders respecting the cargo of the vessel? I had not. How came You to apply to the Continental agent at Wilmington & inform him You had goods for Congress? I wanted assistance to get on my journey. Did you receive any money in France from the Commissioners? Answer. I did, by their order, 42 Louis &—Livres. For what



purpose was this advanced You? To bear my expences in France. I received it at Havre. Did you receive any money or credit from the Commissioners to bear your expences on the passage, or from the port of arrival to Congress? Answer. Neither. The paper marked A. I knew to belong to Mr. Lee, because it was in the packet with the newspapers directed to him which I had opened.

Are You sure there was not not a packet or parcel of papers nearly of the size of that directed dispatches, delivered to You, directed to Robert Morris? There was not. Was the wrapper which You put upon the main packet in place of its original wrapper, which You threw away because it was wet, directed in any manner whatever, or sealed? No, it was a perfect blank, tied by a string crossed over it. Had You any command in the vessel from Havre? None, unless Mr. Dean's letter gave it. Did You act as master or mate? No; I was only a passenger. How came You to say in the beginning of this examination that You received a letter from Mr. Deane, desiring You to take the command of a swift sailing vessel intended to go with dispatches to Congress? I meant only of the packet—papers. Where did You get the paper with which You wrapped up the main packet? On the road.

The examinant further adds that there was a large packet which he delivered to the President, who tore up the seal so far as to see that they were newspapers & said he was mistaken; it belonged to another person, & returned it to the examinant to deliver it to Mr. Brown at Mr. Steaks's which the examinant did accordingly. This packet together with one of near the same size, which the President opened & found to contain only blank papers, were both together with some letters inclosed in one wrapper which the examinant calls the main packet, and which was directed dispatches. It is the same which Gov. Casswell opened, & the examinant afterwards took off the covers, & wrapped it up in another cover unsealed but tied, &

without any direction, & delivered it so to the President.

True Copy of the original examination.

JAMES LOVELL.

*Lee Papers, Harvard University.*

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TO JAMES MOYLAN.

Paris, Jan<sup>y</sup> 12<sup>th</sup>, 1778.

SIR,—Since writing the Letter which accompanies this I have had laid before me the Accounts of the Disbursements of the two Frigates, which are enormous, & what vexes me not a little is the mode in which we have been treated. They have refused to deliver up the Cargo of the *Amphitrite* to our order, untill their Disbursements should be paid. I will make no reflection on this Conduct, but pray you, under the Seal of Confidence, to tell me how you find matters at L'Orient, & if you have any prospect of doing any thing with any one of them or not, or wholly without them. I am most sincerely

Your most Obed<sup>t</sup> & very h<sup>c</sup> Serv<sup>t</sup>,

SILAS DEANE.

M<sup>r</sup> Moylan.

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO JONATHAN WILLIAMS.

[Paris, Jan. 13<sup>th</sup> 1778.]

DEAR SIR,—This will be handed you by Mess<sup>rs</sup> Chamberlins, & belonging to the State of Virginia, who have had the good Fortune to Escape out of England, where they had been in prison; they propose returning in Capt. Nicholson, and as they are obliged to the State of Virginia, they cannot engage any further than untill their Arrival in America; they may, however, be a seasonable aid to Capt. Nicholson. I have, therefore, recommended it to them to apply to you to procure them a passage in him, if he may still have room for them,



and if not, in some other Vessel bound for America. I  
am, &c., &c.,

SILAS DEANE.

M<sup>r</sup> Williams.

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*Thomas Mss.*

TO FERDINAND GRAND.

Paris, 13 Jan'y, 1778.

SIR,—We desired you would continue to honor M<sup>r</sup> Williams's Draughts to the amount of two hundred thousand Livres, in addition to the Five hundred thousand for which a Credit was before given him. We have the Honor to remain, with much Esteem,

Sir, your most obed<sup>t</sup>, &c., &c.,

B. FRANKLIN,  
SILAS DEANE.

M<sup>r</sup> Grand.

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*Thomas Mss.*

TO JAMES MOYLAN.

Paris, 13<sup>th</sup> Jan'y, 1778.

SIR,—Yours of the 2<sup>d</sup> to the Commissioners I have seen; permit me individually to observe that the Conditions proposed by M<sup>r</sup> Gourlade are such as give him an advantage without risque or expence, for if we are to procure M<sup>r</sup> Chaumont's Security for the payment of the Bills drawn for the Disbursments on our Ships, M<sup>r</sup> Chaumont & not M<sup>r</sup> Gourlade ought to share the Commission with you; but we are not reduced to the Necessity of a security in this affair, & the Conduct of these Gentlemen has been such that I will never consent to have any further Connection with them, at least jointly; they refused delivering the Cargo of the Amphitrite to our order untill they should be paid the Disbursments on the Raleigh & Alfred, which they made in the most extravagant manner I ever saw any account of in the Course of my Business, respecting private Consignments it is another affair, & you are the best

Judge how that may be arranged : but I would ask you if it is known that we are to pay the Disbursements on our ships belonging to the United States, whether you cannot do the Business as well without a Connection with them as with one? I wish to think well of M<sup>r</sup> Gourlade ; I have some acquaintance with him & much Concern with his Friend, M<sup>r</sup> Chaumont, to whom I have very frankly communicated my sentiments of their Joint Conduct, & as in such kind of loose partnerships the blame can be easily shifted from one to another, I must be of opinion that if you form a Connection it will be much better to have it with one of them only, but I write this for your Consideration & reply ; an answer to the Question in yours of the 2<sup>d</sup> demands the opinion of the Commissioners jointly. I am, with Respect, Sir,

Your most Obed<sup>t</sup>, &c., &c.,

SILAS DEANE.

Mr. Moylan.

*Thomas Mss.*

To — GOURLARDE.

Paris, 13<sup>th</sup> Jan'y, 1778.

SIR,—We received yours informing of the sailing of the Alfred & Raleigh & that they had probably got safe off the Coast, which we are of opinion must be the Case ; also an account of a prize taken off Bordeaux by Capt. Butler. We received at the same time an account of the Disbursements on the two Frigates, which greatly exceeds our Expectations. We have, however, paid your Draughts for the Ballance. The Hurry we have been in ever since the receipt of these papers has prevented our examining them with that attention which their Importance requires. When we have done it, shall write you more particularly. We shall be greatly obliged to you for any Intelligence which you from time to time can give us. We received the News this Evening of the taking of Mud Island & another Fort on the Delaware by the Enemy ; this is an Event we have for



some time Expected, nor will it make any material alteration in American affairs. I have the Honor to remain in Behalf of Mess<sup>rs</sup> Franklin, Deane & Lee, with much Respect, Sir, Your most obed<sup>t</sup> Hum<sup>l</sup> Serv<sup>t</sup>.,

SILAS DEANE.

Mons<sup>r</sup> Goularde.

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO MESSRS. MORRELL.

Paris, 13<sup>th</sup> Jan'y, 1778.

GENTLEMEN,—Yours of the 8<sup>th</sup> I received & am obliged to you for the Information given. The Lugger will undoubtedly arrive safe. I am surprised that the Agent continues to trifle on the subject of the Ransom. It will oblige Capt. Cunningham to carry the prisoner to America, which will be at once expensive & disagreeable. I must pray you to urge his immediate & decisive answer. I am very sensible of your Situation as to a Commerce with America, but am of opinion that in a time of peace you must come in for a considerable share of the American Commerce.

I am, with much Respect, Gentlemen, Your most obed<sup>t</sup> Ser<sup>vt</sup>

SILAS DEANE.

Mess<sup>rs</sup> Vinne, D<sup>sn</sup> Morrell & Fils.

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO JAMES MOYLAN.

Paris, 13<sup>th</sup> Jan'y, 1778.

SIR,—In reply to yours of the 7<sup>th</sup> Inst. I need only say, that we must, in the first place, get the Expedition compleated which are already on our hands, before we engage anew. Should the Vessel remain undisposed of for a few Weeks, should be glad to know her Dimensions, Age & other Circumstances attending her, from which we may form a Judgment.

I am, with much Esteem, Your most obed<sup>t</sup> &c., &c.,

SILAS DEANE.

M<sup>r</sup> Moylan.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO JONATHAN WILLIAMS.

Paris, Jan'y 13<sup>th</sup> 1778.

DEAR SIR,—Yours of the 6<sup>th</sup> should have been sooner replied to, but individually I have had my hands full of Business & I left it for once to others, who have as usual return'd it upon me. I hope you will not have any further difficulty on Board of Capt. Nicholson's ship. Your prudence will direct the best & easiest Method, at all times, to pursue on such occasion. The process is indeed very extraordinary, but at this Instant we wish not to touch on too many subjects at the same time, but I will employ M<sup>r</sup> Chaumont to represent the matter properly to M<sup>r</sup> De Sartine. We sent this Evening orders to M<sup>r</sup> Grand in writing, to enlarge your Credit, as you desired. I am impatient to hear how you make out as to the Convoy. I am, with much Esteem,  
Yours, &c.,

SILAS DEANE.

M<sup>r</sup> Jn<sup>o</sup> Williams.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO MESSRS. FAIRHOLME AND LUTHER.

Paris, Jan'y 13<sup>th</sup> 1778.

GENTLEMEN,—Your favor of the 2<sup>d</sup>, inclosing Copy of your Memoire to the Farmers' General, came duly to hand. So far as our Interest will extend, we shall use it to have the Liberty you ask granted, which appears extremely reasonable, as the Resolution of that Body will be first communicated to you. Shall be glad to be informed what it may be. We doubt not you will do every thing possible to be done for the Benefit of the concerned, but the Resolutions of the Farmers General must be of Consequence, as it will be a precedent to regulate future affairs of the like nature by. I have the Honor to remain, Gentlemen, Your most Obed<sup>t</sup>, &c.,

SILAS DEANE.

Mess<sup>rs</sup> Fairholme & Luther,  
St. Martins, Isle de Rheis.

*Thomas Mss.*



TO GEORGE HOFFMAN.

Paris, 13 Jan'y, 1778.

Sir,—We duly received your favor of the      of December, & in return are obliged to you for your offers of service, & the part you appear to take in our Cause. The articles you mention are at present in great Demand in America, & those concerned in sending them out must find a great profit, exclusive of paying the risque ; but, as we are not in the Business of purchasing ourselves, can only recommend our Countrymen to you, should any of them be engaged in that Branch, which may doubtless be the Case soon. I am, in Behalf of Mess<sup>rs</sup> Franklin, Deane & Lee, Your most obed<sup>t</sup> humbl<sup>t</sup> Ser't.,

SILAS DEANE.

Mr George Hoffman,  
Hirsberg, Silesia.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO JONATHAN WILLIAMS.

Paris, 13<sup>th</sup> Jan'y, 1778.

DEAR SIR,—We have agreed to give you the additional Credit on M<sup>r</sup> Grand, & shall give him orders accordingly this day. I saw the Letter which our venerable friend wrote you respecting Arthur Lee, Esq<sup>r</sup>. It is very charitable to impute to insanity what proceeds from the malignity of his heart ; but the Doctor insists upon it that it is really his case, & I am every day more & more inclined to give in to it. Sure I am he cannot be far off from it if he pursues the track he is in. I pray you guard well that Letter. We may both of us have occasion for it, as you are as much the object of the malevolence of these Adelphi as myself. It was merely accidental that the Letter sent you was signed only by myself, but as Dr. Franklin avows it, & has under his hand confirmed it, I leave them to make the most of this Circumstance ; at least they will demonstrate to the World their own little suspicious dispositions. If, when

men are in concert transacting business of a mercantile nature, there is not so much confidence between them as that one may sign for all, they most certainly can never do any thing, nor expect the confidence of others. But these men act in every department perfectly in character; that is, perfectly consistent with their ruling passions and motives, and, as they are originals, I foresee that they will force me to introduce their Pictures to the world one day at full length. William Lee has had the Confidence to talk of the Sacrifices he made in London to enter the service of his Country, & to pretend that his stay at Paris was in obedience to D<sup>r</sup> Franklin & my orders; that when he went down to Nantes he found that you had usurped the business belonging to him by my orders; that for that reason he chose not to intermeddle, but returned to Paris, where, tho' we promised to recall your Power, we never performed our engagement, &c. The truth is, he secured every shilling of the very little property he had in London before he left it, to do which he tarried in London more than three months after he was informed of his appointment, and that the business was suffering at Nantes. He had other views. The fate of America was doubtful with him, & he determined to be safe himself. On his arrival at Paris his Brother, who was at Berlin, had left express by his advice to him not to quit Paris until he returned from Prussia. In the mean time no news arriving from America, he determined not to take any part that should exclude him from returning and figuring away among his Brethern the Aldermen, for which he kept the Gown, & still keeps it. Yes, this American Patriot, Agent, and Ambassador is at this moment Alderman of London. When he went to Nantes his pretending to have £10,000 Sterling in London was solely to excuse himself from acting & to secure his retreat. The part he acted at Nantes is better known to you than to me; but on his being informed of his having another appointment he quitted Nantes without resigning his agency or putting the



business in any course, and on his arrival at Paris, finding no funds to support him in his new mission, he began to talk of going back to Nantes, and complained of being superseded by your appointment. To obviate every objection to his leaving of us, we promised to recall your Power as to Prizes. We wrote the Letter & signed it, when, to our Surprise, Arthur Lee, Esq., would neither sign it nor give his consent to its being sent to you, declaring there was no need of it. This was in October, since which the Adelphi have immersed themselves at Chaillot, where they are constantly employed in writing Journals or Memoires or Ridiculous Letters, some of which you have received for me. I pay no regard either to them or their Letters, well knowing that nothing would so much gratify them as to enter into a dispute with them, and I have but one great object in view, which, obtained, I shall choose to retire from Public Trust, and take a proper time to do Justice to myself and others. For you, my friend, I advise you not to be put out of your way by them. It can not be long before you will be able to close the Capital part of the Business, after which, unless it can be put on a new footing, I would not advise you to meddle farther in it. I give you the Council I mean to follow myself. It is too much for men to spend the prime of their Lives in vexation & anxiety for nothing but to be found fault with and blamed. The moment W. Lee imagined the Prizes were to be regained, the idea of Commissions revived in his little avaricious soul, & he was mean enough to make out his pretensions, though he had before left you to get through the advances you had made as you could. Such meanness is exceeded only by the Confidence of the man who could thus avowedly act such a part, at one time screening himself from paying because his name, by his own desire, had not been made use of, and after complaining that he was in danger of being excluded. In a word, he means, it seems, to act the part at once of an Ambassador to the Courts without going to either of them ; of Commercial Agent without

doing the business or advancing money ; of an American Patriot & Alderman of London without going out of Chaillot. But I am ashamed to have said so much on so pitiful an object ; yet I know I must say much more soon. Your Draughts on my Brother for nine Thousand Livres have been paid. I am impatient to hear how you make out about the Convoy, and will send you tomorrow an accompt of the goods shipped for my Brother, to be sent to him by the Brig<sup>e</sup>. Please to try at what rate insurance can be had on that Vessel, with or without Convoy. As soon as the Brig. shall be sailed you will please to forward me the account of that adventure, & send on Duplicates to him by the Brig. If any news of importance arrive at L'Orient, pray send it up without a moment's delay ; much may depend upon our being the first informed, be it favourable or otherwise. I am, Dear Sir,

Your most obed<sup>t</sup> & very Hu'ble Serv<sup>t</sup>,

SILAS DEANE.

To Mr J. Williams.

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO JOHN LLOYD.

Paris, Jan'y 14<sup>th</sup> 1778.

DEAR SIR,—I received your favor of the 6<sup>th</sup> only yesterday. I most heartily join with you in rejoicing at the late signal Success in America, by which the Northern Colonies are for the present put out of Danger, & will, I hope, have time to assist those at the Southward of them. American Affairs are, it is true, in much better Credit than before, but you can but be sensible that a general Reputation or Credit will not induce Individuals to take our Money, untill We have first raised its Value among ourselves. It is unhappily as well known in France as in America, that one Dollar in Silver will purchase several in Paper in any of the Colonies. When I left America, I had no apprehension of its depreciating at all, & when Capt. Cochran was



here, to whom I gave the Encouragement, he assured me it had not sunk at all in its Credit. On that supposition alone, I proposed the sending it out to make the Tryal, for I neither designed to impose on People here, nor to take on myself a Discount, & one or the other I must do, if I had at all Events engaged to exchange this Paper. I need not add on the subject; your own observations where you are must shew you the Impossibility of exchanging it at almost any rate. We had the last Night the news of the taking of Mud Island and Red Bank, on the 16<sup>th</sup> & 20<sup>th</sup> of November, by which Howe has opened the navigation of the Delaware. Gen<sup>l</sup> Washington was near German Town, & another action might soon be expected. My Compliments to M<sup>rs</sup> Lloyd, & accept of the same yourself. I have the Honor to be, Dear Sir, Your most obed<sup>t</sup> &c.

SILAS DEANE.

John Lloyd, Esq<sup>r</sup>

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO JOHN ROSS.

Paris, 15<sup>th</sup> Jan'y, 1778.

DEAR SIR,—I have conversed with Dr. Franklin on the Subject of yours of the 3<sup>d</sup>, who is of opinion that the giving Protection or Encouragen<sup>t</sup> to the importation of British Manufactures into America will be in direct opposition to the Resolutions of Congress, & at a time when the Advantages of the American Commerce are held out as one principal inducement to other Nations to afford us Aid would be to the last Degree impolitic, as well as inconsistent & Dangerous. On Reflection, I doubt not you'll subscribe to the Justice of this Opinion, in which I am fully with the Doctor. Yours of the 10<sup>th</sup> I received last Evening, & am very sensible of the Importance of your Observations on the present Situation of our affairs, & assure you that neither the Honor or Dignity of our Country shall suffer in the least by any Engagements of ours. I wrote M<sup>r</sup>

Hodge. & am very uneasy about his Health, but a large share of Exercise may do him good. He loves action & hates thinking; that is, in a studious, contemplative way. His Confinement in the Bastile affected him in his Health, & the Distress which he must be in for the fate of his Family affects him, & action may divert him. Cunningham had, on the 20<sup>th</sup> December, carried in two prizes to Carogne, one of which sold for £6,000 & the other for 4,500, & was gone out on a second Cruize. Capt. Nicholson writes that he fears your Vessels will not be ready to go out with him, which I hope will not be the Case, as I wish he may not be detain'd after being ready for sea. I am very sorry that Capt. Jones is disappointed in the Frigate he expected. I have the same opinion of him as you have, & wish we could get him a stronger force than meerly the Ranger. He will set out for Nantes in a few days, & I shall improve the opportunity writing to you again by him. By the last Accounts from London, Stocks have fell prodigiously. The news of taking Mud Island raised them a little, but actual Hostilities between the two Kingdoms would sink them to nothing. I am, with much Esteem, Dear Sir, Your very hum<sup>l</sup> Serv<sup>t</sup>

SILAS DEANE.

John Ross, Esq<sup>r</sup>

*Thomas Mss.*

TO SIMEON DEANE.

Passy, Jan'y 15<sup>th</sup> 1778.

DEAR BROTHER,—I received your note by L'Fargue & your Letter of the 29<sup>th</sup> December. I hope this will find you safe in America, in good Health. M<sup>r</sup> Williams sends you this with an Invoice of the goods, by Capt. Fogg; also his Accounts. You will, I hope, be establish'd in Virginia, as many Consignments are gone & going out & you are sensible how much depends on Dispatch & punctuality. I am in hopes to compleat a contract with the Farmers' General, for tobacco; should



that be effected, it will be a very capital affair, & may open a large Scene of Business. I have wrote to enquire at what Rate Insurance may be had on Capt. Fogg, but am as yet without any answer. I am most heartily tired of public Business, & only wish to retire without Loss or Disgrace. Others may give greater satisfaction. No one can be more Zealous or Asiduous than I have been in promoting the Interest of my Country. The moment I can be discharged, I shall take measures for returning, which I cannot, however, hope to do under a year or more, as I shall have many arrangements to take in different parts of Europe, in order to establish such Commercial Connexions as may be of Service as well to America as to ourselves individually. I wish you to enquire critically the price of Masts of every Dimension, & also of Timber such as used to be sent home in the Raft Ships. Something may be done hereafter, in that way, and if it would answer, I can procure a large Contract. Tobacco still holds up, but all the Merchants complain that America is like a Gulph which receives all they send, & returns nothing, No Ships having as yet returned from Virginia, tho' some have been already out near Twelve Months. My Compliments to all Friends. I am wishing you every Blessing. I am Yours, &c.,

SILAS DEANE.

Simeon Deane, Esq<sup>r</sup>

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO BARNABAS DEANE.

Paris, Jan'y 15<sup>th</sup> 1778.

DEAR BROTHER: As I write our Brother Simeon, I shall be the shorter in my Letter to you p'r this opportunity. The Letters and Invoices sent by Capt. Fogg are order'd to be delivered to you in Case of his absence; should any accident have happened to him (which God forbid) you must receive the Goods & make the best possible Disposition of them for his & his Partner's Benefit; he proposed establishing a House at Petersburg

in Virginia, & a number of Consignments have already sailed or are about sailing to his Address; were it possible, I could wish our whole Interest transferred there, as it appears a spot in which we are more likely to do something of Consequence than in Connecticut, & its of Consequence to make an early establishment. I will not in this hazard any thing on Politicks, as I hope in a few days to be able to write more positively. Make my Compliments to all Friends, & accept my warmest wishes for your happiness. I am, Dear Broth<sup>r</sup>, Yours, &c.,

SILAS DEANE.

Barn<sup>s</sup> Deane, Esq<sup>r</sup>

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO JONATHAN WILLIAMS.

Paris, Jan'y 15, 1778.

DEAR SIR,—I received yours of the 9<sup>th</sup>, and will not make any observations on our affairs at Nantes, as you must by this time know the certainty of what I have here only promises. I am excessively uneasy at this appearance of trifling; affairs will not admit of it, they are too serious, & the Consequences too extensive; however, neither you nor we can be kept much longer in a state of Suspense. I send you herewith the accounts of my Brother's goods, which pray you to run your eye over & see if all the Bales have been received, after which forward it to my Brother by the Vessel which carries the goods, with Direction to be delivered to Barnabas Deane, Esq<sup>r</sup> of Wethersfield, in Case of the absence of Simeon Deane; or, if Capt. Fogg, go for Virginia, To Mess<sup>rs</sup> John King & Co., in Case of his, Simeon Deane's, absence; after the sailing of these ships, I expect to see you here to regulate & close their accounts, when you will bring my Brother's for Settlement. I send you herewith a letter for Simeon Deane, Esq<sup>r</sup>, & one for Barnabas Deane, Esq<sup>r</sup>, which please to send on with the Packet by Capt. Fogg. The postage of this packet charge to Simeon Deane & Co. in your account, as it



is his private affair. I am impatiently waiting to hear how you succeed at Brest. I am, Dear Sir,

Yours, &c., &c., SILAS DEANE.

P. S. You'll please to send my Brother a State of his account with you by Capt. Fogg.

Jon. Williams, Esq<sup>r</sup>

*Thomas Mss.*

TO ANDREW LIMOZIN.

Paris, Jan'y 18, 1778.

DEAR SIR,—Your favors of the 5th & 12th are before me, and ought sooner to have been replied to, but Business has intervened & must excuse me. My Brother found himself under a Necessity of leaving France suddenly, & before he could take many arrangements he wished to have taken with Gentlemen in Commerce in this Kingdom. And I can with great sincerity assure you he would have been very happy in a Concern with you, & I doubt not if he arrives safe at Petersburg but you may still be concerned to mutual advantage; he will be situated in the Center of the Tobacco Country, & will have the best Connections there, as well as a number of good Correspondents in France & Holland, among whom I know he reckons on M<sup>r</sup> Limozin's. M<sup>r</sup> Williams is at Nantes, & is a Gentleman at present well known there. I hope the goods in your Hands may be sent forward, if not already gone, without delay, & you will please to send me a note how my Brother's account stands with you on that Commission. We have engaged as far already for the public as is convenient for us. I am, however, obliged to you for informing me of the Sweedish Ship, & permit me to ask at what price she might be freighted pr. Ton. I ask on account of Friends here who are freighting Ships to America. I am, with much Respect, Dear Sir, Your most obed<sup>t</sup>, &c.,

SILAS DEANE.

M<sup>r</sup> Limozin.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO JONATHAN WILLIAMS.

Paris, Jan'y 20<sup>th</sup>, 1778.

DEAR SIR,—In my letter of the 15<sup>th</sup> I inclosed an Invoice of the Goods shipped my Brother, and in one of my letters have mentioned to you the procuring Insurance on those Goods. I wrote you also a long letter frankly communicating my Sentiments on the Conduct of W. Lee, alderman of London, to which letters have no answer, occasioned, I suppose, by your absence from Nantes. By this Conveyance I send you the Invoices of the Packages of those Goods, which hope you will find right & that it will arrive in season to be forwarded by Capt. Nicholson to my Brother. The Thousand Fusees which were sunk, I suppose have been cleaned and shipped, & it is necessary that you send up the account, that it may be stopped out of the first Cost; the same man engaged for Three Thousand Sabres, are they come to hand? his name is Hamet, & he appears to be an honest man. I must again urge you to send up, with all the dispatch possible, any intelligence that may arrive from America which may be of importance; something must arrive soon. I pray you send me a Copy of the letter authorising you to receive & dispose of the Prizes. I have mislaid the Copy I kept, not having entered it on my Books, & only find that of the letter to the Captains signed by D<sup>r</sup> Franklin & myself. I am, &c.,

SILAS DEANE.

J. Williams, Esq.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO JAMES MOYLAN.

Paris, Jan'y 20<sup>th</sup>, 1778.

DEAR SIR,—I wrote you my Opinion respecting the Offers made you by the Gentleman at L'Orient, since which I have not received any thing from you. I now write to advise you tarry still longer in that place & not to be in too great Haste in making Agreements



with those Gentlemen, but to cultivate their good opinion as well as many other persons, which I know is in your natural Disposition to do. I threw out some hints to you when you first proposed going to L'Orient, which you doubtless will recollect. I am still of Opinion that something will soon turn up which will tend to render an Establishment at L'Orient of Consequence, & possibly in the way I formerly hinted at. A few weeks will determine, & I will give you seasonable Notice that if you are for removing elsewhere you may not be detained to your loss; in a word, I have had much Conversation since I saw you, on the Subject of the East India Commerce, & am persuaded that something worth while may be done in that way by an American settled at L'Orient. You know how uncertain our prospects are, however favorable & brilliant they appear at first, but I cannot be long uncertain as to what is proposed to me. Once more let me urge you to dispatch any Intelligence of Consequence which may arrive from America instantly; your Judgement will direct what deserves extraordinary Dispatch. I am, with sincere Esteem,

Dear Sir, yours, &c., &c.,

SILAS DEANE.

James Moylan, Esq<sup>r</sup>

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO MESSRS. DESEGRAY AND BEAUGEARD.

Paris, Jan'y 20, 1778.

GENTLEMEN,—Your favor of the 14<sup>th</sup> is before me. The amount of the Disbursements for the American Prisoners shall be paid to M<sup>r</sup> Beugeard, Jun<sup>r</sup>, or as he shall order. The Saltpetre we have proposed to keep a few weeks longer before we ship it. I am particularly obliged to you for your Recommendations to my Brother's House in Virginia, & shall mention it to him in my next letter, & doubt not he will have it in his power to return you the like Favor in the course of his Busi-

ness & Correspondence, which will be very extensive. Our Affairs are not yet so far regulated as to appoint Agents in the ports; but be assured there is no House in your port or in any other in which we have greater confidence than in yours. I am, with much Respect,

Gentlemen, Yours, &c., &c.,

SILAS DEANE.

Mess<sup>rs</sup> Desegray, Beauguard, Jun<sup>r</sup>, & C<sup>o</sup>

*Thomas Mss.*

TO FRANCIS COFFYN.

Passy, 20<sup>th</sup> Jan'y, 1778.

SIR,—Your letter of the 15<sup>th</sup>, referring to yours of the 8<sup>th</sup>, came safe to hand. The demand of the first has been complied with, &, as to the latter, have to desire that you would procure those two unfortunate men the Cloaths w<sup>ch</sup> are necessary for their Comfort at this season, & provide them with the necessary applications for curing their wounds. As soon as they shall be in a state to make the Voyage, let them embark for Nantes, whence a passage will be provided for them to their Country & Friends. The Cruelty & Inhumanity of our Enemies is shocking, but we have this Consolation that it will be the most pernicious to themselves in the End, as we find daily that their savage Conduct tends to confirm the Americans in their opposition, & procures us Friends among all the generous & disinterested of mankind. You will continue to advise us of whatever may occur in this way or any other interesting to us. I am, with much Respect, in Behalf of Self & Colleagues, Sir,

Your most Obed<sup>t</sup>, &c., &c.,

SILAS DEANE.

Mr. F. Coffyn.

*Thomas Mss.*



TO MESSRS. LIGONIERE.

Paris, Jan'y 20<sup>th</sup>, 1778.

GENTLEMEN,—I should have replied earlier to your esteemed Favor of the 20<sup>th</sup> ult<sup>o</sup>, but that my good Friend M<sup>r</sup> Hodge was on his way to see you, & I had instructed him to explain much more full, as well as safely, what I had to say than it was possible to do by Letter. I hope he is before this with you. I have, therefore, only to thank you for the ready attention you have always paid to the Interest of America, & to refer you to Mr. Hodge for the particulars of our Determinations with Respect to Capt. Cunningham, from whom I have received a letter of the 4<sup>th</sup> Inst. dated at St. Sebastians, to which place I shall write him by the first Courier. I shall be much obliged to you for a Continuance of your Favors, informing of any thing which may pass worthy of Notice, & have the Honor to be, with utmost Respect,

Gentlemen, Your most &amp;c., &amp;c., &amp;c.,

SILAS DEANE.

Mess<sup>rs</sup> Ligoniere & Co.*Thomas Mss.*TO MESSRS. BERARD, FRERES, GOURLADE AND  
MONTPLARISIR.Paris, 21<sup>th</sup> Jan'y, 1778.

GENTLEMEN,—We wrote you the 12 inst. on the subject of the letter returned to M<sup>r</sup> Beaumarchais, since which we are without any of your favours except of the 12<sup>th</sup> inst., which relates to the sales of the Cargo of the Amphitrite, the account of which sales you will please to favour us with a Copy of for our settlement with that Gentleman. It is a little surprizing that Capt. Thompson should count on the Cargo of the Amphitrite to make good his disbursments, as he really had no conversation with us on the subject, nor ever gave us reason to suspect that the disbursments of the Frigates would exceed the prize money due the Public. How-

ever, you are before this informed of our having accepted the Bills, and of their being paid. I have nothing material to add, but, in behalf of self & colleagues, have the honor to remain, with due Esteem, Gentlemen,

Yours, &c.,

SILAS DEANE.

Mess<sup>rs</sup>. Berard, Freres, Gourlade & Montplarisir.

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO CAPT. GUSTAVUS CONYNGHAM.

Paris, 21<sup>st</sup> Jan<sup>y</sup>, 1778.

SIR,—I received your letter of the 4<sup>th</sup> inst., and consulted on the contents with my Colleagues. It is very unlucky that you fell in with that Vessel. Every such adventure gives our Enemies advantage against us by representing us as persons who regard not the Laws of Nations. Your Idea that you are at Liberty to seize English Property on board of French or other neutral Vessels is wrong; it is contrary to the established Laws among the maritime Powers in Europe, tho' it is true that the English, in the last war, paid little or no regard to this Law, but their superiority at sea carried them thro'. They have practiced the same this war, but their situation and ours is very different in point of Force, tho' not so in point of right. You will, therefore, represent the case to the Admiralty just as it was conducted, as you have represented in your Letter to us, & drop your claim; & in future let French, Spanish & other Neutral Vessels pass without detaining of them, unless you find them loaded with warlike stores & bound to the Ports of our Enemy, in which Case only they may be detained agreeable to the Laws & Treaties between the Maritime States in Europe. I hope M<sup>r</sup> Hodge is with you by this time, who can give you more par-



ticulars than is proper for me to write. Wishing you Success, I am, with Esteem,

Yours, &c.,

SILAS DEANE.

Capt. Cunningham.

P. S. I have not as yet received the Ransom Money, nor have I any answ. to my last Letter on the Subject, in which I sent forward the letter of the Hostage, & a Copy of yours to me.

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO LARRALDO DUESTEGREY.

Paris, Jan'y 21, 1778.

SIR,—I received your Esteemed Favor of the 5<sup>th</sup> Inst. & have wrote to Capt. Cunningham, in the letter which I have the Honor of inclosing, our Directions to proceed in this & similar Cases. You will accept my most grateful acknowledgements for your kindness & the part you take in the American Cause. It is really a great & I am confident will be a successful one & that our Commerce will soon be open & free. When that shall be the Case, there will be many articles of yours which shall be in want of, & in return we shall have many which you are in want of, to exchange for them, which must lay the grounds for a larger & beneficial Commerce. We are now in want of large Anchors; & as you mention that article, I must ask you to favor me with the price at which they are generally sold in Spain. I have the Honor to be, with much Esteem, Sir, Yours, &c., &c.,

SILAS DEANE.

Mons<sup>r</sup> Larraldo Duestegrey.  
St. Sebastian.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO MESSRS. GERARDOT AND HALLER.

Passy, Jan'y 27<sup>th</sup> 1778.

GENTLEMEN,—Inclosed you have the Bill drawn by M<sup>r</sup> Williams for 2,460 Livres accepted. I have the honor to remain, &c., &c.,

SILAS DEANE.

Messrs. Gerardot, Haller & C<sup>o</sup>

*Thomas Mss.*

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EDWARD BANCROFT TO ARTHUR LEE.

SIR,—I have before me an attested Copy of a Letter written by you to Mr. Reynolds, desiring him to execute a scheme for deceiving and imposing upon the Printer of the Public Ledger, to obtain thereby the M.S.S. of a letter published in that Paper on the 22<sup>d</sup> of July last, and commissioning him, if that scheme should fail, to use bribery, and “find out the author at any Price,” adding that “a D<sup>r</sup> Bancroft is suspected.” M<sup>r</sup> Reynolds, I understand, rejected this Commission with some degree of resentment, as being a dishonorable one; & I can not but think that it would have been more reasonable, more manly, and more becoming your Station, if, on this and other occasions, when you have thought proper to entertain suspicions of me, you had openly and directly informed of your reasons for suspecting, & thereby have produced an Explanation which I should have endeavoured to have made a candid & satisfactory one. After you have chosen another Strategem, and after that has failed, I do not think you are intitled to any kind of eclaircissement from me; but as I wish to go beyond my Duty to prevent misunderstandings, I shall & do most solemnly assure you that I never wrote, nor procured to be written, nor consented to the writing or even sending, directly or indirectly, to any person whatever in America, a single word unfavourable to your Character, or that of any of your relations known to me as such. And, respecting things which have been at



any time Published, I give you the same solemn assurance that I never wrote or was in any manner concerned in the writing of any thing which ever was printed unfavourable to you or your relations ; nor do I recollect to have written any thing that is published which in any manner concerned you, excepting only some commendations (in the monthly Review) of your first & second appeals and other Political Writings.

If any verbal Expressions have since fallen from me which have appeared exceptionable to you, it should be remembered that they did not fall until after I had received a Cruel & most unprovoked injury from your near relation, and had reason to believe that you were an Approver of [his] Conduct, and also to apprehend that your intentions towards me were of the most unfriendly nature. This Apprehension has given me some uneasiness, and I shall be glad to know that it is groundless, & that your writings have been as harmless towards me as mine have been towards you. I am, with all due Respect, Sir, Your most Obedient Humble Servant,

EDW<sup>d</sup> BANCROFT.

Passy, 22<sup>d</sup> Jan<sup>y</sup>, 1778.

*Lee Papers, Harvard University.*

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ARTHUR LEE TO WILLIAM CARMICHAEL.

Challiot, Jan'y 27th, 1778.

SIR,—Mr. Deane has informed me that you have the book containing the dispatches which I committed to your care in London the year before last for the Secret Committee of Congress. I desire that you will deliver that book with its contents to my nephew, and this, Sir, I trust you will by no means delay or deny. Mr. Deane also informs me that he has written to you for a copy of these dispatches, which I absolutely forbid to be given. You must know that neither you nor any other person has a right to detain or copy what I intrusted sealed to your care, with the strictest injunctions of secrecy. Mr.

Deane says you opened these dispatches & communicated them to him. If this is true, I expect you will account for it. If it is not, you will settle with him who makes the charge. I have the honor to be, Sir, Your most Obed<sup>t</sup> Serv<sup>t</sup>,

ARTHUR LEE.

To William Carmichael.

*Lee Papers, Harvard University.*

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FROM JOHN ROSS.

Nantes, 29<sup>th</sup> Jan'y, 1778.

DEAR SIR,—Referring you to mine of 26<sup>th</sup> Inst. from L'Orient, same by this confirmed, and without any of yours since, have only now to inform you I found poor Thomas Morris, on my return here, in that miserable, Exausted State which must Soon put an end to his days—A Martyr to the most contemptible habit in the Universe! Indeed am of opinion he will be no more before I can receive your answer to this Epistle. The Situation of his affairs, and his perverse obstinacy in not assigning me the management of his business, led me on that as well as many other accounts to address the Commissioners. Your regard for his Brother, who has placed the same Confidence in you as in me, demand your immediate attention to what I have recommended to the Hon<sup>ble</sup> Commissioners. And I doubt not of your success with the Minister, upon a proper representation; to support which, as well to show the powers received by me from his Brother respecting Public & private concerns, have sent the letters in case they may appear necessary to [be] laid before the Minister. Probably M<sup>r</sup> Morris's public appointment may tend likewise to support your application, and the officers of the Crown, being ever attentive on the death of Strangers, Unless you bestir yourself they will get possession of Books, Papers, and every thing their hands can be laid on, and incur an endless expence & trouble even to come at the Books



to command a Settlement of those Gentlemen who grasped every thing that ever came to his address from America. If you are indulged with an order to give me possession, the same authority will grant me full power to command a Settlement from all those of his Connections, and to which attend, as you know it must answer every end to procure redress & Justice if obtained.

As you regard M<sup>r</sup> Morris, whose distresses from the conduct of this unthinking mortal must easily be conceived by you and all his acquaintances, I intreat your utmost exertion in this affair. Not a moment of time is to be lost after this reaches, therefore only necessary now to add that I am, with particular respect,

Dear Sir,

Your very obed<sup>t</sup> Serv<sup>t</sup>,

J<sup>N</sup><sup>o</sup> ROSS.

The Hon<sup>ble</sup> Silas Deane, Esq<sup>r</sup>

N. B.—Please observe that the property of Strangers dying in France is favored of the Crown, & of course merit a speedy application.

*Thomas Mss.*

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FROM JOHN ROSS.

Nantes, 31<sup>st</sup> Jan'y, 1778.

DEAR SIR,—I confirm & referr you to mine by last Post, as I do the Hon<sup>ble</sup> Commissioners, to whom I wrote at the same time, and I have now to inform you of the death of poor Thomas Morris, who departed this Life about 5 O'Clock this morning. His papers and other things in the House are all Sealed by the officer of the place, and must remain so untill instructions are received from the Commissioners, with proper powers to take possession of his books, papers, &c. I shall be exceedingly glad of your opinion on the plan necessary to be pursued, and his Coleague

M<sup>r</sup> Lee being at Paris, am to inform him of this change, that he may adopt the most prudent measures as Commercial Agent, to look after public business should any thing appear from that quarter. The private concerns of the House shall be attended to by me, as well as what regards the public, untill M<sup>r</sup> Lee give instructions respecting the latter. I have only to add that I am, Dear Sir,

Your very obedient Serv<sup>t</sup>,

J<sup>N</sup><sup>o</sup> ROSS.

The Hon<sup>ble</sup> Silas Deane, Esq<sup>r</sup>

N. B. I beg to hear in Course; the business must certainly suffer by delays, consequently no time to be lost.

*Thomas Mss.*

WILLIAM CARMICHAEL TO ARTHUR LEE.

Nantes, Febry. 1<sup>st</sup>, 1778.

SIR,—I had the honor of receiving your letter of the 27<sup>th</sup>, yesterday, by M<sup>r</sup> Thornton, & now have that of informing you that the book you demand, with its contents, will probably be delivered into the hands of those for whom it was originally intended. I must be more accustomed to subordination before I can submit to commands. If, therefore, I acted on no other principle than that of complying with a demand made in so extraordinary manner & at such a time, I should never have had the honor of assuring you that Mr. Deane has not nor ever will have from me the copy you say he has wrote for.

Permit me to observe to you Sir, that there was no occasion of being told now, by Mr. Deane, a circumstance which you was apprized of a few weeks after it happened. Perhaps, indeed, you would not chuse to remember now that you then approved the reasons which induced Mr. Deane to have those dispatches open'd; this your subsequent conduct has evinced by honoring with your confidence & correspondence the man who is now charg'd with opening & com-



municating dispatches, seal'd, as you say, & intrusted to his care with the Strictest injunctions of Secrecy. I hope I shall be able to account to the public, whenever call'd on. The moment I lose the respect which the public now gives me, for You, I expect that you will account to me for this charge against, Sir,

Your Obedient & Humble Ser<sup>t</sup>,

W<sup>m</sup> CARMICHAEL.

*Lee Papers, Harvard University.*

TO CONRAD A. GERARD.

Passy, 1<sup>st</sup> Feb., 1778.

SIR,—Inclosed I have the honor of sending you a Letter on the subject of some objections of M<sup>r</sup> Lee, which I pray, however, may not occasion any delay. By Letters from America & Papers as late as the 20<sup>th</sup> December, we have the pleasure to find that American affairs were in a good situation in general, the people encouraged by the arrival of several ships with supplies, & particularly of the stores which went from Marseilles. Gen<sup>l</sup> Howe had been trying to open a negociation, but appears to have been unsuccessful in his attempts, as the one thing needful, the *sine qua non*, viz., the acknowledgment of independance, was wanting. It appears that New York was closely blocked up by Land, & that Gen<sup>l</sup> Howe was under fears for it from the Northern Troops & Militia. I have only to ask the favour of one Line acknowledging the receipt of this, & have the honor to remain, with the utmost perfect esteem,

Sir, your most Obed<sup>t</sup> & most Hu<sup>b</sup>le Serv<sup>t</sup>,

SILAS DEANE.

P. S. The Tribes of Indians in different parts of America, since the Surrender of Gen<sup>l</sup> Burgoyne, have sued for Peace & Protection to Congress.

Mon<sup>r</sup> Gerard.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO JONATHAN WILLIAMS.

Paris, 1<sup>st</sup> Feb., 1778.

DEAR SIR,—Yours of the 26 I received as to insurance. I suppose you mean to, at, and from America at 55 & 60 pr cent. I want it only over, and am willing to give as high as 30 or 35 pr cent. over for 50 000 Livres on the said Brig & Cargo, if it cannot be done for less, but hope it may, as it has been done at Bourdeaux for under that sum of premium. Capt. Nicholson encouraged my Brother that he could take the Tea as in Place of Private adventure, or he would not have purchased it. However, it must be got out as well as it can, and in the safest manner. As to your conduct towards the alderman, I doubt not it will be safe & honorable, nor do I think he means to involve you in any Dispute in the affair. His view is to fix all the blame of every thing that has gone wrong, or as he supposes wrong, on me, & accordingly he mentions you in his Letters as an innocent & disinterested Person brought into the affair solely by my measures. You may at any time have recourse to them. A copy is not necessary, perhaps, at this instant. I am very impatient to hear of the departure of our little fleet safe off the coast. I write you again tomorrow, and, in the mean time, I am, Dear Sir,

Your most Obed<sup>t</sup>, humble Serv<sup>t</sup>,

SILAS DEANE.

Mr Williams.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO MESSRS. GERARDOT AND HALLER.

Passy, 1<sup>st</sup> Feb<sup>y</sup>, 1778.

GENTLEMEN,—I received your Letter of the 27<sup>th</sup>, and on the 29<sup>th</sup> wrote you in answer, and inclosed the Bill accepted; but, as your servant called yesterday at my house in Town and enquired about that Bill, I am uneasy least it should by some means or other have



miscarried. Please to inform me & you will oblige,  
Gentlemen,

Yours, &c.,

SILAS DEANE.

Mess. Gerardot, Haller & C<sup>o</sup>

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO JOHN ROSS.

Passy, 1<sup>st</sup> Feby, 1778.

DEAR SIR,—Your request in your favours of the 20<sup>th</sup> ought sooner to have been replied to, & if you are still in want of those Passes it will be necessary to send up the Names & Burthen of the Vessel or Vessels, & the names of the Captain, with the Place at which they are to Load. I find by yours of the 26<sup>th</sup> that Mess<sup>rs</sup> Berard Freres have treated you precisely in the same way they treated us. With respect to the ship of Greens, I agree with your opinion, & am content to be wholly free from any connection in the said ship, consequently shall not hereafter consider myself interested in her, but that she will be made, as you suppose, Public property. To the Public she must be profitable, & though I think she most probably would be so to us, yet I want to have as few private concerns as possible just at this time, while so many of the Public press on me. I am quite with you in opinion as to the forming connections with Houses in the Port of L'Orient, or in any other, without the utmost precaution, & I doubt not my opinion is founded on similar observation with yours. I can only say, with great Freedom & sincerity, that, would the Congress appoint you solely or jointly with M<sup>r</sup> Williams, their Commercial agent, I should be extremely happy, & equally so would they impower us to do it. Most surely that Hon<sup>ble</sup> body will not much longer leave their Commercial affairs in the present situation. We have jointly wrote them repeatedly, & I have wrote to my particular friends on the subject. We want Brass Cannon

& many other articles, but the essential one of all—money—is wanting. If commerce open in the Spring, & but small remittances arrive, it will greatly help our affairs by raising our credit; for the almost total failure of remittance from America, public as well as private, has thrown a Damp on our affairs just at this time in the Eye of the People at Large. By American papers of the 19 Dec<sup>r</sup> our affairs wore a good appearance in America, & I hope they will soon do so here. I have only to add that in the affair of the La Brime I relied on your opinion at first in interesting myself, and confident then, as well as now, that you consulted my Interest, I have resolved to be governed by your advice. I am, &c.,

SILAS DEANE.

M<sup>r</sup> Ross.

P. S. After finishing the foregoing Letter, I received yours of the 29<sup>th</sup> announcing an Event naturally to be expected, but which may involve our affairs in unexpected difficulties. Nothing in my Power shall be wanting, as I feel much for my friend, the Brother of this unhappy man, as well as for the Public, & am sensible of the advantages that will be taken by certain persons of the general confusion; but I think that an order to take generally all his papers into the hands of an officer appointed by the Court for the present will be the most safe, as they may by that means be guarded against embezzlement until a more particular order can be obtained, & they will be kept out of the hands of those interested to mutilate or destroy. This is my present opinion. I shall pursue this or a different Plan, as I find on taking farther advice most advisable.

SILAS DEANE.

*Thomas Mss.*



TO ARTHUR LEE.

Paris, 1 Feb., 1778.

SIR,—The inclosed Packet came this moment to hand. Other Letters confirm the Extremity in which M<sup>r</sup> Morris is judged to be. I pray you to communicate the contents to your Brother. I have the Honor to be, &c.

SILAS DEANE.

P. S.—I pray the Letters inclosed may be returned in the morning, as M<sup>r</sup> Ross asks the return of them by the first Post.

To Arthur Lee, Esq<sup>r</sup>*Thomas Mss.*

To — BRONQUIN.

Paris, 3<sup>d</sup> Feb<sup>y</sup>, 1778.

DEAR SIR,—In my Letter of the 19<sup>th</sup> ult<sup>o</sup> I replied to yours of the 10<sup>th</sup> & inclosed the Letters you wrote for. As that is undoubtedly come to hand, take the Liberty of referring to it. Your favour of the 24<sup>th</sup> is before me. It will not suit us to take the Bills you propose. We are not sending money to America, but are trying to do the contrary, to get money from thence. The Congress have opened a Loan Office in America. They borrow for five years, as I understand; they give six pr Cent. Interest for the money, & pay the interest in France. This fund is open, & will be the best for your money in America, which you want to dispose of there. I have the honor to remain, &c.

SILAS DEANE.

M<sup>r</sup> Bronquin.*Thomas Mss.*

TO MESSRS. DELAP.

Paris, Feb<sup>y</sup> 3<sup>d</sup>, 1778.

DEAR SIR,—M<sup>r</sup> Simeon Deane, a brother of mine, has a ship at Nantes, bound for America, which will

be convoyed off Europe and quite to America by a Frigate of 36 Guns. The ship is bound for Boston or Portsmouth, in which passage there is by much the least risque. This ship sails remarkably well under these circumstances. Insurance is wanted to be obtained for sixty thousand Livres if it can be had at 25 pr cent. Please to try, and if it can be done at that do it, and draw for the Premiums at three usances on Mess<sup>rs</sup> Sabbatier, fils et Desprez, who will honor the same, If the insurance cannot be all made pr return of the Courier.

I am, &c.,

SILAS DEANE.

Messrs. Delap.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO JONATHAN WILLIAMS.

Paris, 3<sup>d</sup> Feb<sup>y</sup>, 1778.

DEAR SIR,—I wrote you by the Post yesterday, to which refer you. In a letter, some time since, I sent you an Invoice of sundries furnished by M<sup>r</sup> Montieu for the Magazine, amounting to six thousand Livres and upwards. Did you receive the invoice, and were the articles rightly charged? I sent you also a large Packet, containing the Papers relative to my Brother's affairs, and among others, L'etat d'emballage. Please to say if you received them. M<sup>r</sup> Hennet, of whom we purchased the Fuzees, engaged a number of Swords & Sabres; are they delivered? Please in your next to take notice of the above articles. I never supposed that the few Boxes of which my Brother spoke to Capt. Nicholson would or could be put in to the Ship as Cargo; but as the Captain has always some priviledge of his own, the cabin, &c., he promised to take them in that way, for which my Brother promised generously to reward him, not expecting any advantage other than the greater certainty of their arrival in a Vessel of Force than in another; to have them left will be a great disappointment to him, as he purchased them



relying on Capt. Nicholson's promise to him here, and I must say I shall take it a little hard if Capt. Nicholson has suffered the interest of any other to take place. Will the Cutter carry the surplus of Clothing, or have you engaged another Vessel? It is of importance that the whole be got over as soon as possible. Alderman Lee will do me the favour to deliver you this; I wish he may arrive in season to be of service in the Public affairs in Morris's hands. I confess I doubt it much; I have the fullest confidence in your discretion and prudence. I think it, however, proper to hint to you that every thing relating to the Prizes, as well as your other Transactions at Nantes, is to be settled by the Commissioners, and by them only, with you, and therefore the less said on the subject to any other person the better. I am exceedingly impatient to hear how the Vessel got off the Coast, as it seems a sharp look out is kept for them. I am, &c.,

SILAS DEANE.

P. S.—If Capt. Nicholson is not yet gone when you receive this, tell him my advice is, as formerly, by all means to push for Boston or Portsmouth. Very few ships bound to those Ports have failed. I wish him a good Voyage.

M<sup>r</sup> Williams.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO JOHN ROSS.

Paris, 3<sup>d</sup> Feb<sup>y</sup>, 1778.

DEAR SIR,—I wrote you by yesterday Post in answer to yours of the 26<sup>th</sup> from L'Orient. This comes by M<sup>r</sup> Alderman Lee, who has thought it best to go to Nantes to take the Commercial affairs of the Public in to his own hands, & to obtain, if possible, a settlement with Pennet, &c.; as M<sup>r</sup> Lee is known to be joined in the Commission with M<sup>r</sup> Morris, I conceive the Papers, &c., will not be liable to be seized or detained under the old general Law. The principal

thing will be to guard against his Papers falling into improper hands, & such as will be interested to destroy them. M<sup>r</sup> Lee may, under the right of joint Agent, take all his papers into his hands, & deliver over to you such as concern private property, and particularly our friends, for whom I feel most sensibly. I have never had the least doubt of the rectitude and generosity of his views in the appointment of this unhappy man to this Business; and the part he afterwards took in his favour I have ascribed to misinformation, and in part to a natural and excusable partiality in favour of a Brother, however undeserving. The Death of this irreclaimable man is the best thing which could happen for his Brother, as there was not the least prospect of his making affairs any better by his living; & when he and his follies are buried together, you will be able essentially to serve our friend, by saving all that can be saved out of the wreck of his affairs. As to any application to the minister, it will, I hope, be needless, but it is improper to make one until his Death is certainly known; should it be found necessary, it will be instantly done. We are without any News of importance either from England or America, except that the Ships of the former search all French Vessels, detain many of them, & have confiscated goods found in them, because they were American Growth, or suspected of being destined to America. In one word, the Political patience & forbearance of this Kingdom is now exhausted, and you may daily expect to hear of blows, & very serious ones, too.

I am, &c.,

SILAS DEANE.

M<sup>r</sup> Ross.

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO WILLIAM MCCREERY.

Paris, Feb. 3<sup>d</sup>, 1778.

DEAR SIR,—I received your favour informing of the loss of the Privateer off Bordeaux, and urging



me to procure you a credit on the Billet left in M<sup>r</sup> Chaumont's hands; most cheerfully would I serve you were it in my Power, but as yet I think it will be attended with a loss here; perhaps you may execute the plan to better purpose in Bourdeaux, being on the spot & soliciting in person. We have no news of importance more than you are acquainted with; the universal Cry is War; a little time will determine whether well founded or not. I am, &c.,

SILAS DEANE.

M<sup>r</sup> M<sup>c</sup>Creery.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO MESSRS. DOUBLEDDEMOTT.

Paris, 3<sup>d</sup> Feb<sup>y</sup>, 1778.

GENTLEMEN,—M<sup>r</sup> Dorsius of Charlestown, South Carolina, is a Gentleman we would recommend to you as one much employed and of Confidence, and one very proper to act for you in your affair at that place. Should M<sup>r</sup> Dorsius be engaged in other Business, or should he or his Friends be so interested in the Privateer which made Prize of your Vessel (which is possible) that he cannot properly act for you, we advise you to apply to the Honorable Christopher Gadsen, Esq<sup>r</sup>, sending over the state of your case, & Certificates properly attested, & your Power of Attorney, &c. I am, for myself & M<sup>r</sup> Franklin,

Yours, &c.,

SILAS DEANE.

Mess<sup>rs</sup> T. & A. Doubledemott.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO ——— GOUSIN.

Paris, Feb. 3<sup>d</sup>, 1778.

SIR,—I received a letter signed by you, but without naming either the Place or Date it was written at: shewing it to M<sup>r</sup> Grand, he told me you lived at Liege. I have, therefore, only to thank you for your Proposal,

& inform you that I have at present no demand for the article. I am, &c.,

SILAS DEANE.

M<sup>r</sup> Gousin.

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO CONRAD A. GERARD.

Passy, Feb<sup>y</sup> 4<sup>th</sup>, 1778.

SIR,—Doctor Franklin, as well as myself, were from home when the Packet from you arrived, or we should have acknowledged the receipt of it, and of the Letter you did us the honor to write us by the return of your messenger. I have now to ask your excuse for this seeming Neglect, and to inform you that we are very happy to find that our Sentiments so perfectly agree on the important subject, that we shall not propose any Alteration in the Instruments sent us, and that we shall have them transcribed in the Course of tomorrow, probably by four or five o'Clock, afternoon, After which we shall be ready to attend your Orders.

I have the honor to be with the utmost respect,

Sir, yours, &c.,

SILAS DEANE.

Mons<sup>r</sup> Gerard.

P. S. if agreeable to you to have our interview tomorrow Evening, please to Name the hour and place by the Bearer of this. I thank you for the Account of the Price of Timber & masts, and will take an opportunity of conferring with you further on the subject in a short time.

*Thomas Mss.*

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FROM JOHN ROSS.

Nantes, 5 Feb'y, 1778.

DEAR SIR,—I am just now favoured with yours 1<sup>st</sup> Inst., and am pleased you approve of what I have recommended respecting the La Brune. Be assured she is a



cheap Ship, and most suitable for a Cruizer, had she not been purchased on purpose to carry home the Merchandize, the property of the Public.

Had I some money to employ in the Cruizeing Line, this, or some such ship, properly disposed of in Europe, would have done great matters. This, however, is laid aside for the present from the employment fixed for the La Brune, and I shall be happy to have a confirmation of her safe arrival in America. God Grant it! more for the benefit of the Country than any advantages to me. By Saturday's post am to address the Commissioners on this Subject, & necessary you prepare yourself to concur, as well to secure a Commission for Green, who, you may relye, will not discredit your Countenance, or any like confidence of mine. Time obliges me to cut short the post just on the eve of going, only to add that I shall write on Saturday, and am Sincerely, Dear Sir,

Yours, &c.,

J<sup>N</sup>º ROSS.

To the Hon<sup>ble</sup>, Silas Deane, Esq<sup>r</sup>, Paris.

*Thomas Mss*

TO CAPT. JOHN PAUL JONES.

Paris, Feb'y 7<sup>th</sup>, 1778.

DEAR SIR,—Before the receipt of yours proposing to take the Ships under Convoy that are bound for America, the Commissioners had taken a different arrangement, which they cannot alter. They are sensible of your zeal and attention to the interest of the United States, and must leave it to your own judgment whither or not to accompany these Ships off the Coast; you may probably be of mutual service to each other, and you will soon, if not already acquainted with the reason for our not complying literally with your proposal. I have the honor to be, &c., &c.,

SILAS DEANE.

J. P. Jones, Esq<sup>r</sup>

*Thomas Mss.*

TO JONATHAN WILLIAMS.

Paris, Feb'y 7<sup>th</sup>, 1778.

DEAR SIR,—Yours of the 3<sup>d</sup> inst. is before me, and I impute it to your absence that I am without an answer to several of my last Letters, to which refer you. This serves only to cover Bills of Lading of Boxes of Gunlocks from Amsterdam, purchased by Merkle, and paid for by the Commissioners. M<sup>r</sup> Lee I expected would have gone to Nantes some Days since, and I wrote a Letter to [be delivered by him to M<sup>r</sup> Ross] which afterwards went by the Post; he will probably be the Bearer of this. I wish he may be able to arrange the affairs of the late M<sup>r</sup> Morris, & procure a speedy and just settlement of them. I am, &c., &c.  
M<sup>r</sup> Williams.

SILAS DEANE.

*Thomas Mss.*

FROM JOHN ROSS.

Nantes, 7 February, 1778.

DEAR SIR,—I had but just time to own receipt of your last on Thursday. Being without any of yours since, have by this only to referr you to mine of this date to the Hon<sup>ble</sup> Commissioners, an answer to which I shall look for in Course, accompanying Green's Commission, and as my dispatches therewith must be forwarded on receipt to the place of Rendezvous. If you should have any Command, the same Conveyance will put them carefully on board any of the vessels you may wish to have them sent by. To day came to hand a Letter of 19<sup>th</sup> Decem<sup>r</sup> from your Brother, wrote at Paris previous to his departure. His assurances of seeing me here a few days after receipt of a former he wrote me, laid me to postpone the Execution of the business recommended untill we had some little communing; and this letter, only come to hand this instant, affords no time at present to think of sending any Joint adventure. Hope you have paid that atten-



tion to the order necessary to be obtained to give me possession of M<sup>r</sup> Morris Books & Papers, and not having any doubt of your Success upon proper application; this business must, of course, detain me here untill (if practicable) am able to obtain some Settlement with Mess<sup>rs</sup> Gruel, Pliarne, Penet & C<sup>o</sup>, for which end the Hon<sup>ble</sup> Commissioners shou'd, by Letter, invest me with their power to adopt immediate measures as far as it concerns the Public accounts with the late M<sup>r</sup> Morris. Nothing further offering to give you the trouble of to day, Permit me only to add that I am, with due respect, Dear Sir,

Your very obedient Serv<sup>t</sup>,

J<sup>N</sup><sup>o</sup> ROSS.

The Hon<sup>ble</sup> Silas Deane, Esqr.

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO JOHN ROSS.

Paris, 7<sup>th</sup> Feb'y, 1778.

DEAR SIR,—I received yours of the 3<sup>d</sup> last Evening, & am of your opinion respecting the Papers of the late M<sup>r</sup> Morriss, but know not how the inconvenience apprehended can be avoided. M<sup>r</sup> Lee has obtained a general order from Court to receive them all, as it was impossible to know how far the public & how far the Houses were interested. Distinct orders could not be had, & if they could the same Difficulty would have remained, as they must be examined before they could be separated; & as the order was obtained principally on the Ground of the Public being Interested in his affairs, & M<sup>r</sup> Lee a joint agent, he had a just Claim to the Order. I confess my apprehensions are that Penet & C<sup>o</sup> will quarrel with him or he with them, & that no Settlement will be made. Do you imagine that Gruel & Penet have a Ballance in their hands? They have always pretended to have been greatly in advance. If that were really the Case it would be very different, as they would seek a settlement, & perhaps

submit to a fair one rather than be out of their money. Had M<sup>r</sup> Lee declined going to Nantes, or could he be prevailed on to put the whole affair into your hands, I am very sure the Commissioners have that Confidence in you that they would willingly have Committed the whole to your management ; but such a proposal coming from me would only serve to render him suspicious of the measure. Perhaps, finding the affair like to be spun out by the intricacy of the Transaction, he may consent to put the whole Voluntarily into your hands. I think the proposal coming from you will be more likely to succeed. You will, I suppose, immediately inform M<sup>r</sup> R. Morriss of the Situation of his affairs here & obtain the powers & direction as early as possible ; Though I think the letters you sent to me, & which I now return inclosed, are quite sufficient among Merchants, whatever they may be thought of by men of the Law. I wrote you respecting Capt. Green a few Days past, which I hope you have received, and expect your answer pr first Courier.

I am, &c., &c.,

SILAS DEANE.

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO ST. LOTHE D'ALKERKE.

Paris, Feb'y 8<sup>th</sup> 1777.

DEAR SIR,—Inclosed you have two Letters for my Brothers House in America, who I have desired to render every service in their Power to your Captain, and to recommend him to their Friends. I am wishing you success in your adventure.

Dear Sir, yours, &c., &c.,

SILAS DEANE.

Mon<sup>s</sup> S<sup>t</sup> Lothe D'Alkerke.

*Thomas Mss.*



TO JOHN ROSS.

Paris, Feb<sup>y</sup> 11, 1778.

DEAR SIR,—Yours of the 6<sup>th</sup> came to hand in course ; as M<sup>r</sup> W. Lee will be with you before the receipt of this, we refer you to him for what has been done as to the late M<sup>r</sup> Morris's Papers, &c. In regard to the Ship purchased by you, commanded by Capt. J. Green, which you offer to assign over to the Public account, we are content that you do it and charge the amount of their Debit either in part of the sum advanced you through us, or against the Sums you may have received from them. We depend that you will see every thing that relates to the equipping of this Ship settled and adjusted in the best manner for the interest of the Public, that so she may turn out to them what you assure us of, the cheapest Vessel they have as thus far purchased or equipped. Inclosed is a Blank Commission for Capt. Green, which you will fill up & deliver him ; as he has a Cargo on board, he must act on the Defensive on his Passage out ; after his arrival he will attend such orders as he may receive. If he sail in company with Capt. Nicholson, let him do all in his Power to keep with him thro' his whole Passage, & for that Purpose he is to apply to Capt. Nicholson for his Signals & orders on that subject before he sails. Our orders to Capt. Nicholson are to get in to Boston or Portsmouth if he can, as we consider those Ports as being the safest of any on Continent at this Season. We have nothing to add, but are, with Esteem, Sir, your, &c.,

SILAS DEANE, in behalf of Commissioners.

Mr. Ross.

Tell Capt. Nicholson his Brother has escaped from Prison, & is arrived at Dunkirk, & will be here in a day or two.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO CONRAD A. GERARD.

Passy, 11 Feb<sup>y</sup>, 1778.

SIR,—I received the Letter you did me the honor of writing me yesterday. This morning the Letter of Credit shall be made out, & I will do myself the honor of waiting on you to-morrow Evening with it. I think it necessary in order to know how we are to send forward our Dispatches which are ready. We have ever paid the strictest attention to your instructions, and shall continue the same conduct. As the news of the Destination of the Frigate from Bourdeaux was not spoke of until a month after her sailing, I presume it cannot have transpired from any one at Bourdeaux, as I am assured the strictest secrecy was observed by all concerned there. I have the honor to remain, with the utmost respect, Sir, your, &c.,

SILAS DEANE.

M<sup>r</sup>. Gerard.*Thomas Mss.*

TO JOHN ROSS.

Paris, Feb<sup>y</sup> 11, 1778.

DEAR SIR,—The Letter I sent you by this day's Post was the result of D<sup>r</sup>. Franklin's and my Deliberation on your proposal as to the La Brune; I hope it will come to hand in season & be satisfactory, and as it in effect answers your two last favours, I have only to add that my Brother set off much sooner than what he probably expected when he wrote you; and, of course, as you have no time to execute the joint adventure proposed, it must be omitted; what it was I do not recollect to have heard him mention. Your letters of the 5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup> came to hand together with that to the Commissioners, in consultation on which we had not time to see M<sup>r</sup>. Lee, but you have the opinion of Dr. Franklin with mine, which will doubtless be sufficient, if the proposal should be agreeable to you, which I presume it will; if not, you must take your arrangements for the



Freight as you think just, & as is customary, putting the ship in that case on the Public risque; if you abate the Freight in proportion, or on having the Freight insured by the Public, it can be also lower than if the whole is risked by the owners in a certain proportion. I am of opinion, however, that the most easy & simple method is to put the whole in to the hands of Congress, as proposed.

I am, with much Esteem, &c.,

SILAS DEANE.

M<sup>r</sup> Jn<sup>o</sup> Ross.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO JONATHAN WILLIAMS.

Paris, Feb. 11<sup>th</sup>, 1778.

DEAR SIR,—In addition to what I wrote you per this day's post, please to say if all the goods which belonged to Simeon Deane & C<sup>o</sup> were shipped on Board the two Friends, & the number of Packages they made, and if any other Vessel mention the name, &c.; also please, if completed, to send up the account of the Disbursements & Expences on those Goods, and nearly as you can ascertain the Price of the Brigantine as she will stand in ready for the sea. Be as exact as you can as Mess<sup>rs</sup> Sabbatier, Fils & Desprez, who are interested with my Brother as Partners in this adventure, want to calculate for insurance. Should any thing be done at Bourdeaux, advise me of it by the first Courier, as they will desire to regulate themselves accordingly in season.

I am, &c.,

SILAS DEANE.

M<sup>r</sup> Williams.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO ANDREW LIMOZIN.

Paris, 11<sup>th</sup> Feb., 1778.

DEAR SIR,—I have, by its being accidentally mislaid, left unanswered your favour of the 4<sup>th</sup> until this inst.,

and have now only to say that it will not suit me to have those goods shipped for Charlestown, South Carolina; the place is too remote for my Brother's connection, but if a ship were going direct for Virginia, they might be shipped to the address of my Brother's House there. But if no such opportunity offer, please to send them as heretofore, directed to M<sup>r</sup> Williams. I am, &c.,

SILAS DEANE.

M<sup>r</sup> Limozin.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO CONRAD A. GERARD.

Passy, 13 Feb<sup>y</sup>, 1778.

SIR,—I have met with an American Captain of approved Fidelity & Courage, who is a good Pilot on the American Coast, particularly on New England. He lately commanded a Privateer out of New England, and was taken after an Engagement with an English Frigate in which he lost 31 killed & more than 20 wounded. He was afterwards put into Prison and escaped. This man I think will answer our Purpose exceeding well, & will be ready with our Dispatches on Sunday or Monday next at Farthest. He will want to take a companion or waiter with him, who escaped with him from Prison. Please to say if this man cannot embark at Brest. It will be much more convenient, & as neither he nor his companion speak French, he will be able to do it with as much and more secrecy than can be done by his going to Corogne by Land with a guide, which he must necessarily have. From hence he can go to Brest, and embark without the danger of being suspected, as he is not known in France; but this is submitted to your determination. I have the honor to remain, with much respect,

Sir, &c.,

SILAS DEANE.

Mons<sup>r</sup> Gerard.

*Thomas Mss.*



TO CONRAD A. GERARD.

Passy, Feb. 15th, 1778.

SIR,—I have to acknowledge the reception of the Letter, you did me the honor of writing me, by M<sup>r</sup> Chaumont, by which I presume that The Captain or Pilot only can take passage in the Frigate, but without his attendant, as there will not be place in the Carriage for more than Two; if otherways, please to let me know by the Bearer. It may probably be Tuesday before we shall be intirely ready, which I hope will make no Difference. I have the honor of inclosing you a Boston Gazette of the 25th of December, with a Memorandm. of the News brought by the Captn. of the Vessel which left Nantucket the 6th of January, by which you will see that Genl. Howe had not gained any advantages since his last Letter.

I have the honor to remain, with the utmost respect,

Sir, Your most Obedt. &amp;

Very hum. Servt.,

SILAS DEANE.

Docr. Franklin bids me present you his best Compliments.

Mons. Gerard.

*Stevens's Facsimiles, No. 788.*

TO JACOBUS VAN ZANDT.

Paris, 16 Feb<sup>y</sup>, 1778.

SIR,—I received yours of November last a few days since, and in compliance furnished your son with fifty Louis D'ors. I wish it had been in my power to have freed him from his Debts here, & consequently from the disagreeable manner in which he left this Kingdom. It gives me pain to inform you that he had contracted Debts in this city to the amount of seven or eight hundred Pounds Sterling or more with Trades-

men who put confidence in his appearance and promises, and who will suffer exceedingly, as they are but poor, like the greater part of the Tradesmen in this city. They have been with me to complain of the treatment they have met with from an American, and I have assured them that you would see justice done them, and that I had no doubt that every honest demand against him would be punctually discharged; that the extreme difficulty of making remittances at this time from America had involved your son in difficulties which had forced him to abscond privately, to avoid what would be worse for him; a confinement would be of no service to them. I must say, Sir, that they appear to be honest People, & I believe their demands just; & when I inform you that the principal part of his Debts are to the house where he lodged for his Chambers; to his Traiteur, or furnisher of Provisions; to his wine merchant; to a Coach maker for a new coach which he carried away with him; to a Friend, an Englishman, who lent him money, and to his Taylor, you will be convinced that his Debts are not contracted for Gambling, &c., but for his subsistence. He was certainly imprudent in living in this stile without Funds to support it; but his tradesmen were not to blame for this, as they supposed him to, as he assured them he was, able to pay them. I have, my Dear Sir, a still more delicate matter to mention to you, & which I would not acquaint you with, but that I know you must hear of it otherways, and in a manner less agreeable. Your Son has been charged by our Friends in London, & by our Friends here who have been in London, with having received money from the British Ministry. The Expence he Lived at without any visible supplies, his having been repeatedly to London, and his avoiding any explanation with the Commissioners, or even so much as to see them, all tended to confirm the Charge, and rendered my situation as to supplying him exceedingly delicate, but seeing his distress, I ven-



tured to furnish him by Capt. Courter as above; and since I find the amount of his Debts, there is occasion to hope the Charge may be groundless; but as it had become public, and must of course reach America, I could not but advise you of it, and the light in which it now appears, since I know that an action of this kind would give you greater pain than the Dissipation of his whole Fortune.

I have enclosed your son's Bill to my Brother; your son proposed, as I since learn, to go for Holland, and thence by the way of St. Eustatia to America. I must sincerely congratulate you on the good news what Capt. Courter, the Bearer of this, carries over; the Great and Capital Point settled, lesser objections may easily be arranged. I am, with sincere Esteem, Sir, &c.

SILAS DEANE.

Mr. Van Zandt.

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO SAMUEL BEAL.

Paris, Feb<sup>y</sup> 17<sup>th</sup>, 1778.

DEAR SIR,—I remitted Mess<sup>rs</sup> Clifford & Teyssset £600 Sterling in two remittances on account of the Powder purchased of them, and they have returned me an account of the Powder sold in England, which was detained in Capt. Tewhurst, £148, 7, 6, which leaves me interested, and in advance, the sum of 451, 12, 6, Sterling; and as it is now almost two years since, I must suppose the accounts are closed and ready for settling. I have desired my Brother, therefore, to receive of you my proportion of this adventure, in which you will give me my equal chance, either as to profit or loss. The profit, I presume, must have been very considerable, as the greatest part got safe to hand. I have taken the Liberty of recommending many Vessels to your address; some of them I hope arrived in safety. If in any thing I can

be of use to you or your house, I shall receive your Commands with pleasure.

I am, Dear Sir, Yours, &c.,

SILAS DEANE.

Samuel Beal, Esq<sup>r</sup>

*Thomas Mss.*

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ARTHUR LEE TO SAMUEL ADAMS.

Extract of a letter dated Paris, Feb. 17<sup>th</sup>, 1778.

“I found, upon my return from Germany, that they had contrived to get Dr. Franklin on their side by planning to throw a considerable part of the mercantile business into the hands of Mr. Williams, his nephew. As this was both an affront and an injury to my brother, who was appointed commission agent, Dr. Franklin seems to have expected we should resent it, and, therefore, attached himself to those who he tho't would support him and his nephew. Tho' I was absent all this time in Germany, they reported everywhere that the dissension actually existed, the seeds of which they had laid, though my ignorance of what had passed (for not a syllable had been written me, nor one of my letters answered) prevented its operation in me. This enmity to me was at the same time avowed; the newspapers were made the vehicle of the grossest abuse against me and my brother; and some particular friends of mine, who happened to arrive in Paris, were daily treated with invectives against me.”

“Mr. Deane, whom I consider the author of all the mischief, has artfully mixed so much personal injury and offence against me, with his trespasses against the public, that an accusation of them before Congress might be imputed more to a desire of private vengeance than of public justice. Besides, he has the people under his direction, and the papers in his power, from whence the proofs of his misconduct are to be withdrawn. You know, too, that a person may be well



satisfied of the truth of a thing without being able to produce legal proofs necessary to conviction."

*Sparks Mss., Harvard University.*

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WILLIAM LEE TO FRANCIS LIGHTFOOT LEE.

Nantes, 17 Feb., 1778.

MY DEAR LODOUN,—I wrote from Paris, to go by an Express, that the Com<sup>rs</sup> were shortly to send to Congress, ab<sup>t</sup> ten daies ago, just as I was seting off for this place, in consequence of the death of M<sup>r</sup> Thomas Morris, to take care of the public papers that were in his possession, & to form some plan for the conducting of the Public commercial business, as I am immediately going on my Embassy to Germany. The conduct & managem<sup>t</sup> of things here have been as bad as 'tis possible to conceive, & it is difficult to put them in a better train, for there is a forward Scotchmen here named John Ross, who relying, as he says, on the protection & support of Rob<sup>t</sup> Morris, Esq<sup>r</sup>, has presum'd to take upon himself great airs, & thinks himself master & absolute Lord of the United States. He has gone so far as to forbid those who have done business here for Congress from returning me any Acc<sup>t</sup> of their proceedings, &, indeed, had the confidence to say that I sh<sup>d</sup> not have anything to do with the public business without his permission.

You may be sure I have treated his conduct as it deserves, but it is surely high time to look more attentively than hitherto has been done into the management of the Public business here, & not permit such forward gentry as M<sup>r</sup> R. to have any thing to do, or even presume to meddle with them in any manner. I shall leave this in two daies to pursue my German expedition, but still you may write to me under cover to M<sup>r</sup> I. D. Schweighauser here, or M<sup>r</sup> John Bondfield, Merch<sup>t</sup>, in Bourdeaux. Before this gets to hand you will certainly hear of the happy situation of

our affairs on this side, & that every thing is settled, sign'd & seal'd. A War with G. B. everyone thinks inevitable, & for myself I hardly think it possible that Peace sh<sup>d</sup>. continue two Months, therefore there is little chance of more troops being sent to America. A few Hessian Recruits sail'd some time since, perhaps in the whole 1000 or 1200 Men, & at this season of the year they have a good chance of visiting the West Indias. There are 30 Ships of the Line & 12 or 15 Frigates now at Brest ready for Sea, & 50,000 Land forces are orderd into Normandy & Brittany, opposite the English Coast, & most of them are already arrived, so that England will have enough to do to look to herself, where, notwithstanding all the boasts about subscriptions, they have not yet able to raise any Men worth mentioning, & we have absolutely succeeded in preventing them from geting any fresh supplies from Germany or Switzerland. Pray present my sincerest Affec<sup>t</sup> to y<sup>r</sup> amiable Rib, & remember me to our Fabian, Gen<sup>l</sup> Washington, M<sup>r</sup> S. Adams, M<sup>r</sup> Fr<sup>cs</sup> Lewis, and such of our N. Delegates as I know, not forgetting Dr. Shippin & his whole Fireside.

Adieu, & believe me ever

Most Sincerely & Affly Y<sup>rs</sup>,

WILLIAM LEE.

I send with this a packet with 2 new pamphlets for you & R. H. L.

*Lee Papers, Harvard University.*

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TO CAPT. HARMAN COURTER.

Paris, Feb<sup>y</sup> 17, 1778.

SIR,—We deliver you herewith our Letters & Dispatches for Congress which you will take care of, and on no account let them go out of your possession until you deliver them up to the Hon<sup>ble</sup> Committee of Foreign affairs. On your embarking secure them



in a proper manner for being sunk, in case of being actually taken by the Enemy. We give you 100 Louis d'ors for your expences, of which you will keep an account and render the same to the Congress, to whom we have recommended you, for such further consideration as shall be judged adequate to the services you will render them & the Public, by delivering these dispatches in safety.

We wish you a good Voyage, and with recommending the strictest Prudence & Œconomy, remain, Sir, yours, &c.,

B. FRANKLIN,  
SILAS DEANE,  
A. LEE.

Capt. Courter.

*Thomas Mss.*

#### TO THE COMMITTEE OF WAR.

Paris, Feb<sup>y</sup> 17, 1778.

GENTLEMEN,—This will be handed you by Capt. Courter, who goes express with our Dispatches to Congress and is to inform you that we have wrote by the Capt. of the Frigate in which Capt. Courter takes passage, for you to pay the Capt. of said Frigate the sum of 15,000 Livres, money of France, which Letter of ours we are confident will meet due honor; and we have further to ask you to furnish Capt. Courter with every thing necessary for his making the greatest dispatch on his way to Congress. We most cordially congratulate you on the very favourable turn which American affairs have lately taken,

And have the honour to remain with great Esteem, Gentlemen, yours, etc.,

B. FRANKLIN,  
SILAS DEANE.

Hon'ble the Committee of War  
at Boston.

*Thomas Mss.*

## TO THE COMMITTEE OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS.

Paris, Feb<sup>y</sup> 17<sup>th</sup>, 1778.

GENTLEMEN,—We have given Capt. Courter, whom we have entrusted with our Dispatches, one hundred Louis D'ors. His journey to Corogne will be very expensive. He will keep an account of his Expences, which he will give you, and we recommend him to you for such further allowance, independent of the actual expence of his Voyage, as you shall judge adequate to his services. He appears to be a steady, well-disposed person, and has the Character of a skilful and brave Seaman. We have the Honor to remain, &c.,

B. FRANKLIN,  
SILAS DEANE,  
A. LEE.

Hon'ble Committee of Foreign Affairs.

*Thomas Mss.*

## TO JOHN HANCOCK.

Paris, 17<sup>th</sup> Feb. 1778.

DEAR SIR,—I wrote you some time since that I would send out the Articles purchased for you by Capt. Johnson's orders in a very short time. I then hoped the Frigate which carries this would have sailed directly from France, but it is ordered to Spain, and Capt. Courter is obliged to go to Corogne by Land, which prevents my sending them by him. I hope soon to have a safe passage for them on board some one of a French Fleet, which it is my opinion will visit the American Coast in the Course of the ensuing spring. I do not assert anything from authority, but, from my own observations on the movements making, give you my judgment on as to what will happen. I hope the treaty will meet your approbation & that the Ratification may be dispatched as expeditiously as possible. War will probably, and I think must be, declared on both sides before they can arrive. The insurance in England against a War for 3 months only is 20 pr



Cent, and they appear in great Consternation in England, especially the Ministry, who begin to tremble seriously for their situation, & who have been trying to bring about a Coalition of Parties among themselves, and have had their Emissaries even here with us, secretly trying an Accommodation. However, the affair is now settled, as I trust, on the most lasting foundation.

The articles purchased for you are Knives & Forks for Table and desert & some pieces of Linnen, with two suits of Velvet for your Excellency, &c. I am fully confident that my Brother has had the Honor of waiting on you before this, and of course has given you the History of affairs here, which have not differed materially since he left us; with my most respectful compliments to your Lady, I have the honor to be, &c.,

SILAS DEANE.

His Excellency M<sup>r</sup> Hancock.

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO ROBERT MORRIS.

Paris, Feb<sup>y</sup> 17, 1778.

DEAR SIR,—I wrote you by my Brother, which you must undoubtedly have received, since which nothing new has arrived, except what you will have in the Public Dispatches, on which I most sincerely congratulate you. Though I presume M<sup>r</sup> Ross must have informed you of the death of your Brother at Nantes, yet as so many Letters fail, and as this will probably go safe, I think it my Duty to mention this Event. Alderman Lee was here, and had been since August or September. He immediately on the news went down to Nantes, and I have not since heard from him. He died the beginning of this month; as you place full Confidence in M<sup>r</sup> Ross, and as I am sure he will not abuse it, I must refer you to him for the situation of affairs at Nantes, respecting either the Public or

Private Interest. He can give you the true characters of several very busy persons in that City, as well as of some who mind only their own business, among which I may venture to reckon M<sup>r</sup> Ross & M<sup>r</sup> Williams. They are both my friends; it is therefore delicate to say I would not recommend them to the business of Commercial Agents, because I know they would serve the Public well and to satisfaction, but at the same time having been rather unfortunate in Recommendations myself, and knowing that these Gentlemen could do better for themselves by minding other business, I rather choose to be silent on the occasion. If the system of having Commercial Agents is Continued, permit me to say there ought always to be two in this kingdom, one of which should reside at Paris as the Center, where all accounts should ultimately be referred to, and the other be employed in Visiting the different Ports and manufactures of the Kingdom. I must at the same time say that the person residing at Paris ought to be by himself or by his Connections able to raise almost any sum of money when called upon by the Congress for supplies. The Total want of remittance for many months past on Public, and almost on Private accounts, has greatly hurt our Credit; but the prospect of a War with England revives it, and as soon as it shall be known that a Treaty is signed, the Face of affairs will be universally changed; Political motives keep it as yet a secret. It cannot be kept ten days longer, and I think immediate War must be the consequence. The War cannot last long, but I think it will be extremely severe; on the part of England it must be like the last agonies of a strong man, for though they are inevitably on the brink of ruin, yet the remembrance of what they have been, and a consciousness of their real superiority in maritime knowledge and Bravery, of which they are unquestionably possessed, will and must cause a severe conflict; though sinking under Debts and Factions they must fall in the end, and the more certain as there is no



prospect of any diversion on the Continent of Europe in their favour. The spirit of this nation is at present exceedingly high and inimical against Great Britain, and the frequent Captures made on light or no just grounds serve to fan the fire. We are without any Letters from Congress since October last, and can only judge of your situation by the news received thro' England, or accidentally by merchant men arriving in France, which kind of news is very little to be depended upon. I pray you to make my compliments acceptable to M<sup>rs</sup> Morris, & believe me ever, &c.,

SILAS DEANE.

Rob<sup>t</sup> Morris, Esq<sup>r</sup>.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO MESSRS. DELAP.

Paris, Feb<sup>y</sup> 17, 1778.

DEAR SIR, —This serves only to cover a Bill of exchange which I lately received from America, and to Pray you to inquire for the person on whom it is drawn, and obtain the Payment on my account. I have no Letter of advice accompanying it. I am still without your favour respecting insurance. I am, &c.,

SILAS DEANE.

Mess<sup>s</sup> Delap.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO MESSRS. LIGONIERE.

Paris, Feb<sup>y</sup> 17<sup>th</sup>, 1778.

SIR,—By a Billet I this moment received from my Colleague M<sup>r</sup> Lee, I learn you had not received my answer to yours respecting Capt. Cunningham's Prizes. You, who are on the Place, must be the judge of what is proper & what can be done, and the Commissioners have the fullest [confidence] in you that every necessary step will be pursued to obtain the delivery of those Prizes, and that they will be disposed of to the best advantage. The last news from America gave us most

favourable accounts of the situation of our Forces, though nothing of Consequence had happened at the close of the month of December, when the armies were still in the Field. Permit me to recommend the Bearer, Capt. Courter, to your Civilities, & as he sett's out this instant, I have no time to add, save that I am, with the utmost respect, Dear Sir,

Your most obedient & very Humble Serv<sup>t</sup>,

SILAS DEANE.

Mess<sup>rs</sup> Ligoniere & C<sup>o</sup>

*Thomas Mss.*

WILLIAM HODGE TO JOHN ROSS.

Bilboa, Feb'y 19th, 1778.

DEAR SIR,—You will probably think that I have been very neglectfull in not writing to you oftener, and the only apology that I can offer is, that I have been engaged in the most troublesome affair that ever I undertook, and had I expected that I should have had half the trouble to Encounter with, the Cutter might have remained in Bilboa, before I would have taken the Management of her; but as I engaged with you and Mr. Deane that I would take charge of her, I am determin'd that nothing shall be wanting on my part. All our seaman had left the Cutter before my Arrival at Bilboa, but the New England seamen, going on board to pursue the Tobacco Brig, occasioned our people to go on board likewise; but as soon as she returned to S<sup>t</sup> Anthonys, our people again left the Vessell. I immediately went up to S<sup>t</sup> Anthony, and when I went on board, there were a greater number of prisoners than our Men, and its being an open port, I wonder that they did not take the Vessell from our people. After my going on board with six Men as a reinforcement, there was still danger, but thank God, we brought her safe into Bilboa, and I have had nothing but trouble with our people ever since. I have been obliged to settle with them for their wages



and prize Money, and after all one half have left the Vessell. The wages and disbursements upon the Cutter amounts to Pieces of Vellon 109,284, and the share of prize Money to the officers and crew Amounts to 137,750 Pieces of Vellon besides their share of prize Money of the ship Hope and Cargo (which was brought into this port since my Arrival), in which they shared one third; and forty-two Volunteers who shared at the rate of one half the ship Hope, N<sup>r</sup> Pieces of Vellon 239,458.24, which Money, together with some more, I have been obliged to take up to discharge the demands against the Cutter. A Letter from the Hon<sup>l</sup> Arthur Lee, Esq<sup>r</sup>, to Cap<sup>t</sup> Conyngham has been of considerable detriment to me, and has puzzled me to know how to act in regard to the Accounts; it appears very artfull and wicked, As well as a Letter he wrote to Corrunna, likewise one wrote to the Gardoques, who he desires to furnish the Cutter with a Credit only for one half of her disbursements and charges, as only half he says belongs to the Congress. I shall Enclose you a Copy of the Letter to M<sup>r</sup> Ligoniere at Corunna and likewise a Copy of the letter to Captain Conyngham. I hope you will employ your pen with these Gentleman, and send the Copy to M<sup>r</sup> Deane.

The Vessell is very indifferently manned, nevertheless I shall set sail to morrow for Martinique, to which place I hope you will write me and inform me what answer you have from Arthur Lee, Esq<sup>r</sup>. M<sup>r</sup> Roach, our first Lieutnant, has left us, and will be with you in a few weeks; he will be a proper person to take charge of the Cutter that is with you, if she is not disposed off. I would recommend that you would send her to Martinique if she is delivered up to us. Cap<sup>t</sup> Conyngham, unfortunately taking the French Brig, has been the occasion of upwards of Ten Thousand dollars being stopped in our friends hands at Corunna, and how the affair will End I know not. I shall leave Cap<sup>t</sup> Conyngham's accounts of wages and disbursements upon the Cutter to be forwarded you by Mess<sup>r</sup>

Gardoques. I am obliged to hurry out of the port, as it is possible that an order may come against the Cutter, in consequence of her takeing the French Brig. Capt. Conyngham requests me to inform you that there is a ballance due him, and in case any accident should happen, that you would take care that his wife might receive it. My Compliments to all friends, And accept the same from your friend and humble Serv<sup>t</sup>,

W. HODGE.

Mr. John Ross.

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO MESSRS. DELAP.

Paris, 20<sup>th</sup> Feb'y, 1778.

DEAR SIR,—I received yours of the 14<sup>th</sup>, and am consulting with M<sup>r</sup> Desprey, who is concerned in the adventure ; decline taking the Policy at 35¼ pr Cent, as it is most evidently beyond the risque ; at least it appears so to us, & the Chamber at Rouen have done at 25 pr Cent ; therefore, as you have reserved, on Condition of my not approving, the right of taking it back, I must advise you to do it ; for though at the Time I wrote M<sup>r</sup> Williams, my apprehensions led me to go to that height of premium, I have reason to think the risque less than it was. I cannot comprehend the reasoning of your Underwriters when they say a War is apprehended, and therefore we advance the rate of insurance. Will the English Cruisers have more leisure to watch for and intercept our Commerce when they have the whole Force of France to engage with, than at present ? Surely, the direct reverse must be the Case ; for my own part, I firmly believe that a War will break out between the two Nations, and very soon ; but were I sure of it, and of the Time, and had Goods to send to America, I would choose to wait for such an Event, if not too distant, as I should consider the risque diminished, by at least one half, the moment it took place. I have no advice yet of the Vessel sailing.



Your Observations are just on the late unhappy Mr. Morriss, and I am confident the Congress will immediately on receiving the News of his Death give Orders for a Settlement of his affairs and an honorable discharge of whatever Contracts he may have entered into on their account. I am, &c., &c.,

SILAS DEANE.

Mess<sup>rs</sup>. Delap.

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO SIMEON DEANE.

Paris, 20<sup>th</sup> Feb'y, 1778.

DEAR BROTHER,—This Letter will be sent by a Ship of Mons<sup>r</sup> Deladebot, Merchant at Bordeaux, whom I have recommended to be addressed to you at Petersburg, Virginia; should the ship arrive in any other Port, as you have Correspondence in all, I must pray you to recommend to your Friends the Dispatching the Vessel and giving every assistance in their Power for the benefit of the Voyage, as I well know you will do if she arrive with you. I am, my Dear Brother, yours, &c.,

SILAS DEANE.

Simeon Deane, Esq<sup>r</sup>

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO ——— BROUQUINS.

Paris, 20<sup>th</sup> Feb'y, 1778.

DEAR SIR,—I received last Evening the Letter you did me the honor of writing the 20<sup>th</sup> of Jan'y. I am always happy to be of service to you or your Friends, but I have not had as yet the pleasure of seeing Mons<sup>r</sup> Dutasta. I am obliged to you for your Interest in favor of my Countrymen at Bordeaux, and am sure they will remember you with Gratitude. I have the honor to be, &c.

SILAS DEANE.

Mons<sup>r</sup> Brouquins, Receiver Gen<sup>l</sup>, Bordeaux.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO SIMEON DEANE.

Paris, 20<sup>th</sup> Feby., 1778.

DEAR BROTHER,—In packing up my Letters to send by Capt. Courter, I omitted the inclosed. You have doubtless before this delivered your Dispatches and arrived at Petersborough. Duplicate of the inclosed will be sent you by the Vessels what carry the Goods. I may not add, but am, &c., &c.

SILAS DEANE.

Simeon Deane, Esq<sup>r</sup>*Thomas Mss.*

TO CAPT. HARMAN COURTER.

Paris, 20<sup>th</sup> Feb'y, 1778.

SIR,—I have only to pray you to add to the Packet already sent you the inclosed for my Brother, which I had before forgot. Wishing you a Good Voyage, I am,

Sir, your, &amp;c.,

SILAS DEANE.

Capt. Courter.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO MESSRS. LIGONIERE.

Paris, Feb'y 20th, 1778.

GENTLEMEN,—I take the Liberty of inclosing a Packet for Capt. Courter, by whom I wrote to you a few Days past; if he is still in Corogne, I pray you deliver it to him, & he will satisfy for the postage; should he be gone, please to return the packet to me under Cover to Paris. I have the honor to remain, &c.

SILAS DEANE.

Mess<sup>rs</sup> Ligoniere & C<sup>o</sup>Merc<sup>ts</sup> at Corunna.*Thomas Mss.*



TO ANDREW LIMOZIN.

Paris, Feb'y 20<sup>th</sup>, 1778.

SIR,—I would not by any means have the Goods on your hands of M<sup>r</sup> B. Deane's shipped to Carolina ; if no opportunity offer for Boston or Virginia, please to send them as before directed to M<sup>r</sup> Williams at Nantes ; if any offer for Virginia, send them to Mess<sup>rs</sup> Simeon Deane & Co., Petersburg, Virginia. Our last news from America is as late as the 6<sup>th</sup> of Jan'y, which nothing decisive had happened, but as Gen<sup>l</sup> Washington was still in the Field, and Gen<sup>l</sup> Howe in Great want of Provisions in Philadelphia, an Action was every day expected. I have the honor to be, &c.

SILAS DEANE.

M<sup>r</sup> Limozin.

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*Thomas Mss.*

TO MESSRS. FAIRHOLM AND LUTHER.

Paris, 20<sup>th</sup> Feb'y, 1778.

GENTLEMEN,—I should have replied sooner to yours of the 3<sup>d</sup>, but have been waiting an answer from the Minister to whom I sent the Letter, or rather the permission from the officers of the Firme [Férmieus] which you inclosed to me ; I am sorry to be still without any answer from them. I therefore write now only to let you know I have not neglected your affair, and that I will take the earliest opportunity of informing you of the Event, whatever it may be. I am, with much respect, &c.,

SILAS DEANE.

Mess<sup>rs</sup> Fairholm & Luthur,  
S<sup>t</sup> Martins, Isle of Rhee.

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*Thomas Mss.*

TO JOHN HODGSON.

Paris, Feb'y 25, 1778.

SIR,—I received your favour of the 9<sup>th</sup> inst. inclosing your accounts current with Mess<sup>rs</sup> Alsop, Living-

ston, Morris & C<sup>o</sup>, Baltimore, in your favour 7,687<sup>£</sup>, which shall be paid to your order here, and you will please to mention in your Draught its being ballance of their account. I have at present no account open in Amsterdam or I would order you the money there. I am, &c.,

SILAS DEANE.

Mr Jn<sup>o</sup> Hodgson.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO CHARLES W. F. DUMAS.

Paris, Feb<sup>y</sup> 25, 1778.

DEAR SIR,—I have only time to acknowledge the receipt of yours of the 17 inst., and also to thank you for the Fish & Butter which you sent us, and which is come to hand after having been detained some time at Rouen by some mistake or other. I can send you nothing more than what you must have already been informed of, the great preparations for War and the probable appearances of that Event being at the Door. I have had the pleasure of dining several times with the Grand Factieur and am greatly pleased with him. As you have the news from London, I will make no observations, except that I think their Consternation is visible & that they betray a littleness of soul in their Distress, which is indeed Common to Tyrants. Present my Compliments to your Lady, and assure yourself I am ever, &c.,

SILAS DEANE.

Mr Dumas.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO JOHN P. MERCKLÉ.

Paris, Feb<sup>y</sup> 25, 1778.

SIR,—Your last letter which I received was of the 16<sup>th</sup> inst, in answer to which, as well as to what you have heretofore wrote on the subject of the Fusils, I have only to remind you that our intermedling at all



in this affair was solely to relieve you, not to fulfil any contract we had either made or were privy to. That the Examination of the articles purchased by you was submitted to M<sup>r</sup> Grand & C<sup>o</sup>; that agreeable to our promise we had received and paid for such as were approved of. That those which you now write about have been disapproved of, and consequently will have nothing to say to them. You say they are good; if they are so, we have, you are sensible, no proof of it in the only way we agreed the proof should be made; besides, if they are really good, you can be no sufferer, for, going out to America, no article will answer you better. You must, therefore, excuse us from any farther concern in an affair in w<sup>h</sup> we have gone the full extent of our agreement. I am, &c.,

SILAS DEANE.

M<sup>r</sup> Merklé.

*Thomas Mss.*

FROM CAPT. JOHN PAUL JONES.

Ranger, Quiberon, 26<sup>th</sup> Feb'y, 1778.

HONORED SIR,—I duely received your favor of 7<sup>th</sup> current. I suppose you have already heard of the Interchangable Salute in this Bay, for the first time, between Freedoms Flag and that of France. However, as the account you may have received has not perhaps been particular, you will please to accept of the following. The Independence accepted of my Convoy from Nantes to this place. I was off here the 13<sup>th</sup> and sent my Boat in to know if the Admiral would return my Salute; he answered that he would return to me, as the Senior American Continental Officer in Europe, the same Salute which he was authorized by the Court to return to an Admiral of Holland or of any other Republic, wh<sup>ch</sup> was 4 Guns less than the Salute given. I hesitated at this, for I had demanded Gun for Gun, therefore anchored in the entrance of the Bay at a distance from the French Fleet; but after a very particular enquiry, on the 14<sup>th</sup>, understanding that

he had really told the Truth, I was induced to accept of his offer—the more so as it was in fact an acknowledgement of American Independence ; the Wind being contrary, and blowing hard, it was after Sunset before the Ranger got near enough to salute La Motte Picquet with 13 Guns, which he returned with 9. However, to put the matter past a doubt, I did not suffer the Independence to salute 'till next Morning, when I sent the Admiral word that I should sail thro' his Fleet in the Brig, and would salute him again in open day ; he was exceedingly pleased, and returned this Compliment also with 9 Guns. This Squadron is Officered by a very well-bred set of men, all of whom have visited the Ranger and expressed great Satisfaction, calling her un parfait Bijou ; when we visited their Ships we were received with every mark of Respect and Gladness and saluted with a Feu de Joie ; so much, indeed, have they endeavoured to prepossess us in their favor by their constant attentions and Civilities, that if they are not Serious they are the greatest of all dissemblers.

Inclosed I now transmit you a Copy of a hand bill which I found necessary to publish when I took this Command, and which hath since been fully approved by the Marine Committee ; this little publication had the desired effect in America, for I found no difficulty in manning the Ranger. I submit to you whither the publication in the English papers of the Encouragement in our Navy, as expressed in the middle of the Bill, might not induce English as well as American Seamen to come over to France, or to any other part of Europe that might be pointed out, where they could meet with a proper reception.

I gave a Copy to M<sup>r</sup> Carmichael some time ago, who told me that the middle part would be published in England ; if so, it will, I think, make its appearance before this reaches you ; if it does not, it remains with you to publish or suppress it.

As I now understand that this Fleet goes to Roch-



fort for a Reinforcement. I determined to proceed alone, as I see that the Supply Ships stand in no further need of my protection.

From the accounts which I hear, I am induced to hope that the New Frigate will yet be given up. I have much in Contemplation. I cannot insure Success, but I will endeavour to deserve it. If I am fortunate you will soon hear from me again; in the mean time please to present my best Respects to Doctor Franklin, and believe me to be, Honored Sir,

Your very obliged, very Obedient, Most humble  
Servant,

JN<sup>o</sup>. P. JONES.

The Hon<sup>ble</sup> Silas Deane.

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO CONRAD A. GERARD.

SIR,—My Brother will be ready to set out his second Expedition this Evening or early in Morning. I therefore take the liberty of sending to know if you have any Letters to send by him, and to pray that you would let the Capt<sup>n</sup> know that my Brother has done justice to his conduct. I only ask some hint of this, as I understand the same Captain goes out again with him, and a good Understanding between him & his Passenger may be productive of very good consequences. I have the honor to remain, with the utmost respect, Sir, your most Obed<sup>t</sup> & Very hum<sup>b</sup> Serv<sup>t</sup>,

SILAS DEANE.

Passy, 1<sup>st</sup> March, 1778.

*Stevens's Facsimiles, No. 796.*

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FROM JOHN ROSS.

Nantes, 3<sup>d</sup> March, 1778.

DEAR SIR,—I Refer you to my last, 26<sup>th</sup> ult<sup>o</sup>, addressed to the Hon<sup>ble</sup> Commissioners, respecting the

Change of property in the La Brune, which replys fully to your favour 11<sup>th</sup> ult<sup>o</sup>. At same time, tho, I have in part communicated my sentiments to them likewise in regard to the unprecedented, unwarrantable, and illegal measure of the American Commercial agent. I think it necessary now to acknowledge receipt of your favour 7<sup>th</sup> ult<sup>o</sup>, which time cou'd not permit my answering sooner. It is impossible you cou'd exercise your Judgement in the least on the consequences likely to attend M<sup>r</sup> Lee's posting expedition to seize and clandestinely Search (upon the flimsy pretence of his powers as Agent) the Books, papers, & Secret Correspondence of Willing, Morris & C<sup>o</sup>, and that of Robert Morris, Esq<sup>r</sup>, Brother to the late M<sup>r</sup> Thomas Morris, as well the correspondence of others with those Gentlemen, in a public and private Line, knowing too well any business done by this forward, assuming Agent could not give him the smallest shadow of a pretence to exercise his powers in the prying, officious Character which every man of spirit & virtue must view it in, so foreign & inconsistent with the agency appointment, in which I dare say he is ignorant enough to think he has done signal services to his Country. In my absence, knowing my sentiments to be such as I shall always avow openly, however uncouth and harsh, he wished to avail himself of a measure which ought to have ocurred to him much sooner, did he regard his Character. He appointed a meeting with William Blacke and John Lloyd, Esq<sup>rs</sup>, & M<sup>r</sup> George Redhead, all of South Carolina, in hopes to obtain a certificate under their hands that he had only Selected such papers from the collection he had possession of as only regarded the Public; but those Gentlemen, more prudent then our interprizeing, wise, mighty Agent, declined it, as not being Judges of those selected by him under the Idea of Public from the private papers; besides they were not unacquainted with the circumstances of M<sup>r</sup> Lee being employed for some preceding days in the Secret examination of all those



papers, in consequence of which they begged also to be excused, as out of their line, to lend their Signatures to certificates, without proper and clear examination of the papers to satisfy themselves, whether they were really public or not. Our Champion was so chagrined and mortified on receiving their answer, that his passion and dignity forced him to a declaration, the papers (as they lay in the Trunk) should be carried to Paris, and put in the hands of the Commissioners. A noble and well-digested resolution, you'll no doubt acknowledge, to have the Correspondence of men of Character and business transported at pleasure by this Agent, unauthorized, unless by the Commissioners, who I must think could never so precipitently enter into a measure of the kind.

A Letter of yours selected with many others is said here to have made discoveries of great impositions on the public. This I imagine, as only then in my opinion known to him, is brought to light by his insinuations. You may, therefore, naturally conclude, likewise, that hints have been thrown out, since his departure, of much abuse in public trust, &c., &c. Your own Correspondence you ought to recollect, if so it must lead you to reflect whether you have acted consistent with the duty your Country look for from their Confidence in you in a public line, and what you likewise owe to your Character as an honest man.

I have too high an opinion of our mutual Friends, insulted by M<sup>r</sup> Lee, to entertain an Idea of any discoveries dishonourable to their Characters as men of business, and it may be particularly necessary for M<sup>r</sup> Lee not to indulgde his insinuations to the prejudice of their Character and reputation in any line without proofs different from strained constructions & malicious insinuations. Your Letter relates to the Scheme of Captain Bell, which may serve to prove it has been the Subject of conversation here; & should it prove necessary, you may freely use my name as the person to give you this information, to satisfy M<sup>r</sup> Lee and

others that I despise every underhand, mean subterfuge attributed to certain Characters Suspected in fomenting your divisions.

I have experienced the prying, officious, forward, assumed power of M<sup>r</sup> Lee in attempting to impose his inquiries on me, and having had applications from him in which I conceive certain suspicions couched, I declare openly if he should dare to throw out any hints prejudicial to my Character, and that it comes to my knowledge, it will not escape me, my reputation being too dear to me to overlook any malicious freedom to trust me. Wretched prospect, should Characters drawn from obscurity and Ignorance be indulged in the liberty of insulting and abusing men of spirit and principle, contending and defending their libertys and propertys, under every distress that a Country can support, and that in contempt of the very Laws and customs of the very Country in that unhappy situation which has brought them to consequence through the Subject of it.

M<sup>r</sup> Lee's powers cannot command a Settlement with Mess<sup>rs</sup> Gruel, Pennet, or any other connected with the late M<sup>r</sup> Morris, whither of public or private nature, which might easily occur to you and others concurring in giving him possession of the papers. Am obliged to the Hon<sup>ble</sup> Commissioners for their favourable opinion of me, but I do assure you I should be extreamly cautious in venturing on the inspection assured by M<sup>r</sup> Lee, even with their authority, had I not been possessed of much better from M<sup>r</sup> Morris of Philadelphia, who alone had the Right in his person. And which I know (tho ignorant of the Law) to be Sufficient among Merchants, and even supportable in any Court of Inquiry, while acknowledged by those whose powers am invested with. Thus have I given you my Sentiments on this Singular Management of your Commercial agent, and hope the Commissioners will of themselves interpose now to take care of those useless papers carried off by M<sup>r</sup> Lee, not answer-



ing his ends in the expedition for discoveries. I am,  
with Respect, Dear Sir,

Your very Obed<sup>t</sup> Serv<sup>t</sup>,  
J<sup>N</sup><sup>o</sup> ROSS.

The Hon<sup>ble</sup> Silas Deane, Esqr.

N. B.—hope the Fleet may still be in the Bay,  
from some information received yesterday from Capt.  
Jones; if so, the Vessels in the River will join.

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO CONRAD A. GERARD.

Passy, March 9<sup>th</sup>, 1778.

SIR,—I have received a Letter from the Committee  
of Congress for foreign affairs, dated 8<sup>th</sup> December, in  
which I am informed that the Congress were in the  
greatest uncertainty as to affairs in Europe, and had  
accordingly directed them to write to me to return,  
in order to give them intelligence of the situation of  
their matters here. Though the dispatches sent by  
Spain, by my Brother, and by other ways, will un-  
doubtedly be satisfactory, yet I shall, as I learn that  
another Commissioner is appointed to supply my ab-  
sence, prepare as soon as possible to comply with  
their directions; and I shall do myself the honor of  
waiting on you to-morrow, having several things of  
importance to mention, in addition to what I had the  
honor yesterday of communicating. I am, &c.

SILAS DEANE.

M<sup>r</sup> Gerard.

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO WILLIAM LEE.

M<sup>r</sup> Deane's Compliments wait on M<sup>r</sup> W<sup>m</sup> Lee and  
informs him that he can have no objection to the  
Gentlemen mentioned in his Letter to the Commis-  
sioners jointly, having long corresponded with some

of them, and had a good opinion of the others; as Dr Franklin appears inclined to give a separate answer, Mr Deane presumes the above will be all that is necessary for him to say on his Part.

Tuesday, 10<sup>th</sup> March, 1778.

*Thomas Mss.*

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JOHN ROSS TO THE COMMISSIONERS.

The Honorable Commissioners Benj. Franklin, S. Deane, & A. Lee, Esq<sup>rs</sup>.

Nantes, 12<sup>th</sup> March, 1778.

HON<sup>BLE</sup> GENTLEMEN,—I did myself the honour to address you on the 26<sup>th</sup> & 28 Ult<sup>o</sup>, being since without the favour of any of yours. Permit me to repeat my request of being informed by you, Hon<sup>ble</sup> Gentlemen, What has been done with those books & papers carryed off from hence by Mr. William Lee. Yesterday I heard, and not before, of a very timely precaution he took on the day of his departure, of getting Mr. Blake and Mr. Lloyd, of South Carolina, to put both their seals on the trunk, as if it had never been touched by him, no doubt to impose on the Commissioners as takeing the liberty to carry off the whole. With this litle subterfuge, had he but succeeded in his application to those Gentlemen and Mr. George Redhead in the certificate applyed for, after a previous four days private examination of all those papers of both a public and private nature, it woud add to the farce, and probably derive a temporary satisfaction from his own sagacity and prudence.

The Henrietta Brown being detained long in Nantes river by contrary winds was prevented from joining the Convoy. The Captain, however, embracing the first fair wind, took his departure from St. Nazers on the morning of 3<sup>d</sup> Inst., and hope may be fortunate to get clear of those seas and safe, the winds proveing favourable ever since. I sent orders to stop him untill



I heard from you, but my letters come too late, therefore, what happens, I have the satisfaction in my own breast that nothing has been omitted on my part in the execution and dispatch of the business.

Last post brought me the inclosed Copys of the Hon<sup>ble</sup> Arthur Lee's letters wrote by him to Spain; haveing accordingly proofs therefrom of his undetermined opinion in regard to the purchase of half the Cutter Revenge, made by Mr. Hodge and me, I hope the Hon<sup>ble</sup> Commissioners will not keep this business any longer in a state of uncertainty. I wish only to conduct every concern of mine openly and fairly, as the surest and best way to gaurd against disputes. Nor have I a desire for any kind of bargain (however favourable the prospect) which may lead to after altercations or reflections. I have the honour to be, with particular respect, Hon<sup>ble</sup> Gentlemen,

Your ever obedient Servant,

JN<sup>o</sup> ROSS.

Endorsed by Arthur Lee, June 26, 1778, "This Letter was not shewn to me."

*Lee Papers, Harvard University.*

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TO WILLIAM LEE.

Passy, 11<sup>th</sup> March, 1778.

SIR,—I can have no objection to the Persons you propose appointing to act under you in the Commercial Agency, nor can I take any active part in that affair. I must once more pray you to return me the two original Letters of M<sup>r</sup> Ross to me, which I lent you last summer at my house in Town. I must also ask an Explanation of the following extract of a letter from M<sup>r</sup> Ross to me of the 3<sup>d</sup> inst.; after saying that you had spent four Days in secretly examining the Papers of the late M<sup>r</sup> Morriss, he adds: "A Letter of yours, selected with many others, is said here to have made discoveries of great impositions on the public.

This I imagine (as only then, in my opinion, known to him) is brought to Light by his Insinuations. You may, therefore, naturally conclude likewise that hints have been thrown out since his Departure of much abuse in public Trust," &c.

As it is probable that I shall return to America before you return to France, I conceive it but just & honorable in you to inform me previous to either of our leaving France of any imputations of this Nature which you have authorised against me. I have the honor to be, &c., &c.,

SILAS DEANE.

W<sup>m</sup> Lee, Esq<sup>r</sup>

*Thomas Mss.*

SECRET MEMOIR BY CARON DE BEAUMARCHAIS.

Memoire Secret pour les Ministres du Roi, Seuls.

Envoyé a M. le C<sup>te</sup> de Vergennes, le 13 Mars, 1778.

Par caractère et par ambition, M<sup>r</sup> Arthur Lée fut d'abord jaloux de M<sup>r</sup> Deane; Il a fini par deviner son ennemi, ce qui arrive toujours aux petites âmes plus occupées a Supplanter leurs rivaux qu'a les Surpasser en mérite.

Les Liaisons de M<sup>r</sup> Lee en Angleterre et deux frères qu'il a dans le congrès en ont fait depuis, un homme important et dangereux. Son plan ayant toujours été de préférer, entre la France et l'Angleterre, la puissance qui le menerait plus sûrement a la fortune; l'Angleterre a pour lui des avantages reconnus: Il s'en Souvent expliqué dans les soupers libertins.

Mais pour y réussir, Il fallait d'abord écarter un collègue aussi redoutable par les lumières et Son patriotisme que M<sup>r</sup> Deane: Il y est parvenu, en le rendant Suspect au congrès, Sous plusieurs aspects. Ayant appris que l'armée américaine voyait avec déplaisir des officiers étrangers venir postuler des grades militaires, Il a envenimé le zèle de Son confrère qui les avait envoyés: et la conduite de quelques français échappés de



nos Iles justifiant peutêtre l'éloignement qu'on avait pour nos officiers en amerique, M. Lée a profité de ces dispositions pour affirmer au congrès que M. Deane avait fait de Son chef et malgré de bons avis, cet envoy d'officiers, aussi dispendieux qu'inutile à la république.

Et comme les 1<sup>ers</sup> pouvoirs de M. Deane ne portaient que sur des objets de commerce, on a saisi cette ouverture pour désavouer tout ce qu'il avait fait a cet égard, et c'est une de causes de Son rapel aujourd'hui.

Un Second motif de ce rapel, est le soin officieux que M. Lée a eu Sans cesse d'écrire au congrès ; que tout ce que la maison Hortalez avait expédié de marchandisés et de munitions d'Europe etait un présent que la france faisait a l'amérique : qu'il en avait été instruit par M. Hortalez lui mesme, de sorte qu'on n'a pu voir que de tres mauvais œil, au congrès, arriver des factures, des demandes et des marchés qu'on doit accomplir, munis de l'attestation et Signature de M. Deane ; comme ayant été faits par une maison commerçante et sous la condition rigoureuse des retours les plus prochains.

Rien n'a donc été Si aisé au Politique Lee que d'envenimir la conduite de M. Deane, en la donnant pour l'effet de menées Secrettes et tendantes a favoriser des demandes d'argent dont il partagerait ensuite le profit, et tout cela explique fort bien le Silence plus qu'etonnant que le congrès a gardé Sur plus de dix lettres de moi tres détaillées: ce silence est ce qui m'a déterminé a faire partir un homme intelligent et discret qui put éclaircir le fond de toute cette intrigue.

Aujourd'hui M. Deane, au comble de l'affliction Se voit rapelé brusquement et durement. Il lui est enjoint d'aller rendre compte de sa conduite et se justifier de plusieurs fautes qu'on ne désigne pas.

Dans son ressentiment, Il avait résolu de ne point partir que le congrès ne lui eut envoyé les charges et griefs qu'on lui impute, ne voulant pas, disait-il, s'aller livrer aux mains de ses ennemis personnels sans emporter avec lui des justifications capables de les confondre, mais je l'ai fait changer d'avis.

Pour bien concervoir l'importance de ce rapel de M. Deane en un moment aussi critique, il faut, en me permettant de parler a cœur ouvert, qu'on le persuade avec moi que l'angleterre est pour beaucoup dans les menées de M. Lée. Il faut savoir qu'il a fait venir Son frère l'Aldermen, de Londres ; que c'est par son moyen qu'il tient ses correspondances Secrettes, et qu'après que J'ai eu debattu bien des Soupçons accumulés, sur les moyens que l'angleterre employe pour etre instruite a point nommé de tout ce qui Se fait en france de relatif a l'amérique ; Je me suis d'autant plus fortement arretté a l'idée que M. Lee est une lame a deux tranchants, que, depuis quatres Jours que les lettres de rapel de M. Deane et qui nomment M. Jones Adams à sa place sont arrivées, M. Lée a envoyé très Secrettement Son valet de chambre à Londres. Il est parti avant hier au soir. A quelle fin ce mystérieux message ? comment Sait on Toujours Si juste a Londres ce qui passe a Versailles ? comment a ton été instruit Sur le champ qu'il existait un plan de traite entre l'amérique et la france ? Et comment a ton fait de si grands effort pour me corrompre et me faire parler a prix d'or, Sinon pour parvenir, par des avis insidieux, a m'enveloper dans la disgrace de M. Deane et me perdre a Versailles pendant qu'on le perdait en amérique ? Ce valet, envoyé a Londre a l'arrivée du rapel de M. Deane, est la clef de tout.

Ainsi donc il est prouvé pour moi que pendant que l'angleterre envoie des commissaires en amérique, et que les parens et amis de M. Lée s'appréter a favoriser dans le congrès la reconciliation des deux peuples ; on cherche a ruiner en mesme tems par des calomnies, l'influence ou le crédit des deux hommes qu'on sait etre le plus attacher au plan d'alliance entre la france et l'amérique, M. Deane et moi.

Cet honeste américain qui jusqu'a Son arrivée en france n'avait jamais éprouvré les noirceurs dont les politiques ne se font qu'un jeu, Se trouble, il perd, la teste, et loin d'aller en amérique affronter l'orage, armé



de son innocence ; il voulait rester en france pour y attendre les griefs et S'en Justifier.

Pendant que cette intrigue a Son Succès en Amérique, M. Lee ayant besoin en france de quelqu'un qui put Servir sa double vue de perdre en mesme tems, S'il pouvait, M. Deane et moi, a trouvé Justement dans le comte de Lauragai l'homme dont il pouvait assés aiguïser le ressentiment contre moi, pour le porter a me nuire.

Il ne lui a fallu, pour aliïner entièrement mon ami que lui montrer mes lettres chiffrées, par les quelles Je recommandais a lui, Lée, de Se bien garder de politiquer avec M. de L——, parceque cela m'était expressement déffendu.

Non qu'on dut Se méfier du cœur francais de M. de Lauragais ; mais parceque tout homme Sensé doit redouter l'indiscrétion, le tatillonage politique, et qu'en affaire grave ce qui est inutile est toujours de trop.

Armé de tous les Secrêts de M. Lee, M. de Laur (agais) a cru posséder plus de titres qu'il n'en falait pour venir me tater et surtout m'emprunter cent mille francs dont il avait grand besoin. Sur le refus de Jaser et l'impossibilité de pretter M. De L—— m'a quitté brusquement, et depuis cet instant les deux politiques ont agi de façon que M. De Lauragais qui, comme les enfants, triomphe toujours trop tot, a repandu Sourdement dans Paris que J'étais perdu, qu'on ne me disait plus rien a Versailles, que J'étais mesme Suspecté de trahison, et qu'on avait mis des Espions a mes trousses. De Son coté M. Lee n'a pas manqué d'instruire Ses amis d'Angleterre que l'amant de l'Amérique, c'est ainsi qu'ils m'appellent, était disgracié, et qu'on n'avait plus rien a craindre de ma part.

Voilà l'historique fidèle de l'intrigue qui a produit la disgrâce de M. Deane, a préparé ce qu'on nomme la mienne, et nous a conduit Jusqu'au moment ou J'écris cet aperçu.

Le bout du fil une fois trouvé, le reste est bien facile a dévider.

A la vérité tout cela parait bien misérable : mais comme ce Sont presque toujours les misères qui nuisent aux grandes affaires, on est obligé de S'en occuper ; ne fus ce que pour S'en garantir.

Aussi, loin de regarder la désgrace imprévue de M. Deane comme un mal, et loin de fortifier le dessein qu'il a de rester en france jusqu'à l'arrivée des griefs ; J'envisage le projet de le faire partir comme un coup de la fortune, et Je pense qu'on ne peut employer trop de force pour y réussir.

"Votre justification entière," lui ais je dit, "est dans mon portefeuille. Lée vous accuse d'avoir, de votre chef, envoyé des officiers en amérique et J'ai dans les mains une lettre chiffrée de Politique Lée qui me presse avec instance d'envoyer des ingénieurs et des officiers au Secours de l'amérique ; et cette lettre est écrite avant votre arrivée en france. M. Lée prétend avoir reçu de moi l'assurance que tous mes envois au continent étaient des présens de la france et que tout le reste est un jeu de votre cupidité, mais, dans ce mesme portefeuille ou je puise, J'ai le commerce chiffré de Lée et de moi, qui prouve que mes correspondances ont été établies par ce Lée mesme, Sous la forme et sur le ton d'un commerce actif et réciproque et non autrement.

Donc vous n'avez pas imaginé de votre chef que l'amérique avait besoin d'officiers : Donc, Suivant, a votre arrivée en france, les erremens pris avec M. Lée, vous ne pouvés etre coupable aux yeux du congrès pour avoir regardé comme un commerce honorable ce qui fut établi Sous cette forme, et n'a pris un autre nom dans la bouche de votre perfide accusateur, que pour vous nuire : Et c'est ce que Je vous promèts d'Etablir Sans réplique."

C'est avec de pareilles armes, avec de tels argumens que Je Suis parvenu a rendre le courage a mon ami dézolé. Je l'ai déterminé a braver cet ouragan d'un jour, et Je lui ai promis un mémoire pour le congrès, ou J'Etablirais Sa conduite active, honête et patrio-



tique avec tant de clarté, les pièces a l'apuy, que Ses ennemis pourraient bien Se repentir de leur imprudence.

Mais le prompt départ de cet agent amériquain me parait aussi instant qu'essentiel: car le porteur de nos conventions ayant été forcée de relacher a Brest quinze jours après etre parti de Bordeaux, a perdu plus de deux mois. Les commissaires de l'angleterre arrivés avant lui, auront divisé, Seduit ou gagné le congrès. Si un homme habile et vigoureux n'est pas la pour balancer la puissance de l'intrigue anglaise, par l'avantage de nos offres! Eh, quel homme est plus propre a cet ouvrage que M. Deane?

Convaincu qu'il doit Sa disgrace aux Ennemis de la france, Il Soutiendra ce qu'elle desire avec d'autant plus de bonne foi, que c'est d'elle Seule aujourdui qu'il va tenir Sa justification et Sa considération en amérique.

J'oserais donc proposer, pendant que J'Etablis solidement la première, qu'une attestation honorable de Sagesse et de bonne conduite accordée par le ministère assurat la Seconde.

Je desirerais mesme que quelque faveur particulière, comme un portrait du Roi ou tel autre présent de marque, assurat a Ses compatriotes que non Seulement il fut agent honorable et fidèle; mais que Sa personne, Sa prudence et Ses travaux ont toujours été agréables au ministère de france.

M. Deane croit (et c'est Sa ferme opinion), que la france ne doit plus perdre un Seul instant pour Se montrer avec éclat en faveur de l'Amérique. En conséquence S'il Se determine a partir, Il ne croit pas faire une demande extraordinaire en Soubaitant et proposant qu'une flotte du Roi le conduise a Boston, afin que cet effort public de la france l'aide efficacement a renverser le projet de pacification de l'angleterre, et rendre vaines les Séductions de Ses commissaires et l'intrigue des amis de M. Lée.

Sans cet effort, Il croit que tout est perdu pour notre

alliance. Je pense comme lui que cet Eclat renverserait tous les obstacles au traité : mais comme beaucoup de choses peuvent Suspendre encore la résolution d'une démarche publique de la France, quelques Soient la dessus les dispositions du gouvernement ; Je pense qu'on ne doit pas hésiter de profiter du rapel de M. Deane, pour Se presser d'envoyer en Amérique et chargé d'honneurs personnels un homme utile a nos intérêts.

Une fois justifié dans l'esprit du congrès, Son opinion devient d'un poids immense et d'une autorité respectable. Il entrainera tous les Suffrages, et l'on résistera d'autant moins a la force de Ses représentations, que Ses ennemis fraîchement confondus, Seront encore dans le trouble, étourdis et honteux de leur mauvais Succès.

Si le ministère ne lui accorde pas la flotte qu'il désire ; Il lui faut au moins une frégate du Roi : M. de Sartines y pourvoira. Il lui faut un bon mémoire apologétique et justificatif, et de cela son ami Beaumarchais S'en charge avec plaisir. Il lui faut une attestation honorable Sur Sa gestion ; et cette pièce importante est l'ouvrage de M. le C<sup>te</sup> de Vergennes. Enfin Je crois qu'il lui fait une faveur distinctive qui prouve le contentement qu'on a su de Sa personne, Et cette faveur me parait devoir émaner de la main même de M. Le C<sup>te</sup> de Maurepas, au nom du Roi.

Mais il ny a pas un moment a perdre. Les anglais n'ont parlé de pacification que depuis qu'ils ont été convaincus, par des avis Secrèts, que la France envoyait un traité en Amérique. Depuis la nouvelle du Rapel de M. Deane pourquoi ce valet de chambre de Lée, qui court a Londres ? Si ce n'est pour presser le départ des commissaires, afin qu'ils aient fini leur affaire, avant que la notre Soit entamée ?

Il me parait donc important que M. Deane armé de toutes pièces, mais avec l'air et le ton d'un homme affligé qui Subit Sa disgrâce et part Sans consolation S'embarque pour l'Amérique. Il faut que tout ce qui ranime Son courage Soit un Secret pour tout autre ; afin que Ses Ennemis et les notres Se croyant Surs



de leur triomphe, S'endorment Sur les précautions. Je me propose mesme de quitter Paris, Si l'on veut dans le mesme tems, comme un homme persécuté qui abandonne tout. Mon procès d'aix m'y Servira a Merveilles. Mais Je propose aussi qu'un homme Sur, parte avec M. Deane, pour rapporter par la mesme frégatte chargée de l'attendre, l'Effet du travail de M. Deane Sur le Congrès.

Alors la ruse de nos adversaires retombant Sur eux mesme, leurs efforts pour nuire a nos desseins Seront précisément ce qui en aura haté le Succès.

Si ces rues paraissent Sensées et Sont approuvées, aussitot que J'en aurai l'assurance, Je quitte tout et ne prends aucun repos que la justification de M. Deane ne Soit par moi Solidement établie.

CARON DE BEAUMARCHAIS,

Pr. Doniol, Histoire de la participation de la France, etc.

#### TRANSLATION.

Secret Memoir to the King's Ministers, sent to the Count de Vergennes, March 13, 1778.

Mr. Arthur Lee, from his character and his ambition, at first was jealous of Mr. Deane. He has ended by becoming his enemy, as always happens in little minds more concerned to supplant their rivals than to surpass them in merit.

Mr. Lee's connections in England and his two brothers in Congress have since made him a prominent and dangerous man. His design has ever been to choose, as between England and France, the power that would most surely promote his fortunes, and he has frequently declared this at his dissolute suppers.

But to succeed, it was first necessary to dispose of a colleague so formidable, because of his intelligence and patriotism, as Mr. Deane. He has succeeded, by rendering him, in many respects, an object of suspicion to Congress.

Having learned that foreign officers demanding commissions were unfavorably regarded by the American Army, he has put the worst construction upon the conduct of his colleague who sent them, and the behavior of some Frenchmen, slipping over from our (West Indian) islands, justifying perhaps the aversion with which our officers are regarded in America, Mr. Lee has turned these circumstances to his advantage by maintaining to Congress that M<sup>r</sup> Deane, arbitrarily, and in spite of good advice, is responsible for their presence, as costly as it is unprofitable to the Republic.

Moreover, in order to disavow everything that Mr. Deane has done, advantage has been taken of his earlier instructions, which mentioned only commercial matters, and this is to-day one of the reasons for his recall.

Another reason is the officious zeal displayed by Mr. Lee in continually writing to Congress that all the merchandise and European supplies furnished through the firm of Hortalez were a present from France to America, and that he had been so informed by M. Hortalez himself. Congress, in consequence, has viewed with much mistrust the prices-current, the requests for payment and for purchases to be made, although these were attested and signed by Mr. Deane, as having been entered into with a business firm, and strictly on condition of returns to be sent as soon as possible. Nothing, then, has been easier than for the adroit Lee to blacken the conduct of Mr. Deane, by representing it as the result of underhand measures, contrived to support demands for money in which he expected to share ; and this explains the silence, more than astonishing, that Congress has observed in regard to over ten letters of mine full of details.

At present, Mr. Deane, overwhelmed with troubles, finds himself rudely and imperatively recalled, and commanded, moreover, to explain his conduct and to vindicate himself from the imputation of numerous faults not mentioned.

Conscious of injustice, M<sup>r</sup> Deane had resolved not to



return until Congress should communicate the charges and complaints against him, unwilling, as he said, to deliver himself to his personal enemies without proofs capable of confuting them. But I have persuaded him to change his resolution.

In order to fully understand this recall at a critical moment it is necessary, if I may be permitted to speak frankly, that others should be persuaded, as I am, that England has much to do with the proceedings of Mr. Lee. It is necessary to realize that he has brought his brother, the alderman, from London, that it is through him he maintains his secret correspondence, and that after I had investigated many theories of the means employed by England to keep perfectly informed of everything done in France, I was the more impressed with the idea that Mr. Lee was a two-edged sword, and that within four days of the arrival of letters recalling Mr. Deane and appointing Mr. Adams, Mr. Lee furtively sent his valet de chambre, who set out the day before yesterday, to London.

Why this mysterious message? How does it happen that what passes at Versailles is always so accurately known in London? In what way was the information of the projected treaty instantly conveyed, and with what intent have strenuous efforts been made to corrupt me and bribe me to speak, unless, by giving ground for insinuations, to involve me in Mr. Deane's disgrace, and to ruin me at Versailles while he was being ruined at Philadelphia? The expedition of that valet to London upon the news of Mr. Deane's recall explains everything.

Thus it is clear, in my opinion, that while England sends Commissioners to America, and Mr. Lee's relatives and friends exert themselves to render popular a reconciliation between the two countries, there is at the same time an attempt to destroy by slander the influence or the credit of Mr. Deane and myself—the men known to be the most attached to the policy of an alliance between France and America.

This worthy American, who, until his arrival in France, had never experienced those calumnies that are among the common tricks of politicians, is dejected. He has lost his head, and, instead of going to breast the storm in America, he prefers to remain in France to await the complaints against him and to refute them.

With the success of this intrigue in America, Mr. Lee—having use for someone in France to serve his double object of ruining me together with Mr. Deane—hit upon the Count de Lauregais, a man whose resentment against me he might excite to the point of doing me an injury. To completely alienate my friend it sufficed to show him the cypher letters in which I had advised Lee, because it was expressly forbidden, to beware of talking on political subjects with M. de Lauregais. Not that there was a question of M. de Lauregais' devotion at heart to French interests, but because every sensible man should avoid indiscretion and tattle, remembering that in grave affairs whatever is not of utility is superfluous.

Charged with all the confidences of Mr. Lee, M. de Lauregais supposed himself to be better qualified than in reality he was to sound me, and especially to request a loan of one hundred thousand francs, which he greatly needed. Upon my refusal to trifle or to lend, M. de Lauregais quitted me with impolite celerity, and since that moment these two have arranged that M. de Lauregais—who, like a child, always forestalls his triumph—should quietly announce in Paris that I was lost, out of favor at Versailles, suspected even of treason, and dogged by spies; while Mr. Lee has not neglected to inform his friends in England that "America's devotee," for thus they style me, was in disfavor, and that there was nothing more to fear from me. This, then, is the precise history, to date, of the intrigue that has produced Mr. Deane's disgrace and prepared what is asserted to be my own. The end of the thread once found it is very simple to unravel the whole fabric.

All this may, indeed, seem very trifling, but since it is



usually these little annoyances that affect important affairs, it is imperative to note them, if merely to guard against them. Therefore, far from regarding Mr. Deane's unexpected disgrace as an evil, and far from fortifying his design of remaining in France to await the charges, I believe that his departure might turn out to be a lucky incident, and that too much trouble cannot be taken in order to accomplish this. "Your complete defence," I said to him, "is in my portfolio. Lee accuses you of having arbitrarily sent officers to America. I have in my possession a cypher letter from this time-serving Lee, urging me to send engineers and officers to the assistance of America, and the letter is written before your arrival in France. Mr. Lee pretends to have received from me an assurance that all my shipments to the continent of America were presents from France, and that any other assertion is an invention of your avarice ; yet in this same portfolio, where I am exploring, I find the cypher communications between Lee and myself, the proofs that my correspondence was sanctioned by Lee himself under the form and in the language of active, mutual trade, and not otherwise."

"You have not, therefore, arbitrarily imagined that America needed the officers ; and, moreover, in following, since your arrival in France, the precedents established with Mr. Lee, you cannot be guilty in the sight of Congress for having accepted as actual business what was begun with that understanding, and never has been called anything else by your false accuser, except with the intention of injuring you. This is what I propose to establish beyond cavil."

With similar representations and such arguments I succeeded in reanimating my disheartened friend. I have determined him to face this brief tempest, and I have promised him a memoir to Congress in which I would so clearly vindicate his activity, probity, and patriotism, that his enemies, confronted by the written evidence, would repent their imprudence. The prompt

departure of the American agent seems to me a matter of pressing necessity, for the messenger carrying our treaties having been obliged to disembark at Brest, fifteen days after sailing from Bordeaux, has lost more than two months. Before his arrival the English Commissioners will divide, bribe, or win over Congress, if an expert man is not there to vigorously oppose the English intrigue by the inducements we offer. Who, then, is better fitted for this task than M<sup>r</sup> Deane?

Convinced that he owes his disgrace to the enemies of France, he will support her interests with the greater devotion, for to her alone he at present looks for his justification and standing in America. While I accomplish the former, I venture to suggest that the latter be established on the part of the ministry by an honorable testimonial to his wisdom and good behavior.

I would desire a particular mark of distinction, even—the king's portrait or some such noticeable present—to convince his countrymen that not only was he a creditable and faithful agent, but that his personality, prudence, and action have always pleased the French Ministry.

M<sup>r</sup> Deane firmly believes that France should not lose an instant in openly displaying her sympathy with America. If, therefore, he decides to return, he does not suppose that his wish and proposal that he be escorted to Boston by a Royal fleet will be thought extraordinary to the end that this public demonstration on the part of France shall effectually tend to the overthrow of the English plan of a reconciliation, and defeat the wiles of her Commissioners and the intriguing friends of M<sup>r</sup> Lee.

Without this demonstration, M<sup>r</sup> Deane believes that our Alliance will fail. I agree with him that this publicity will remove all the obstacles to the treaty, but as many things may yet delay the action of France, however favorable the disposition of the Government, I think there should be no hesitation in profiting by the recall of M<sup>r</sup> Deane, to hasten the departure to America of a man loaded with personal honors and useful to our



interests. Once justified before Congress, his opinion becomes of immense weight and influence. He will carry with him all suffrages, and his authority will be the more irresistible because his enemies, recently discomforted, will remain in their tribulation, dazed and humiliated at their own failure.

Should the Ministry be unable to grant him a fleet as he wishes, he ought at least to have a Royal frigate to be furnished by M. de Sartine. His friend Beaumarchais will with pleasure undertake the composition of an explanatory and defensory memoir. He should have a testimonial, laudatory of his conduct, and this important writing is the province of the Count de Vergennes. Finally, I believe that there should be accorded him some special favor, showing the esteem entertained for him personally, and this would properly come from the hand of the Count de Maurepas, in the name of the King.

There is not a moment to lose. The English did not propose a reconciliation until, from their secret information, they were convinced that France was sending a treaty to America. Why, after Mr. Deane's recall, did Mr. Lee's valet hurry to London, if not to hasten their Commissioners, that they might conclude their affair before ours is begun?

It seems to me to be necessary that M<sup>r</sup>. Deane, armed with all the evidence, though assuming the air and tone of a disheartened man who submits to a humiliation, should sail for America, that what revives his courage should be concealed from others, and that his enemies and ours, anticipating an easy victory, should relax their precautions.

At the same time, if it is considered advisable, I will quit Paris like one who has been driven to despair. My law suit at Aix will furnish an excellent excuse. I suggest, in addition, that a reliable person accompany M<sup>r</sup>. Deane, to return in the same frigate, under orders to wait his convenience, bringing the result of M<sup>r</sup>. Deane's labors with Congress.

Thus the deceit of our enemies will react upon themselves, and their very efforts to injure us will hasten our success.

Upon the assurance that these considerations are approved as just, I will neglect everything else, nor rest until I have completely vindicated Mr Deane.

CARON DE BEAUMARCHAIS.

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FROM CAPT. HARMAN COURTER.

Corunna, 13 March, 1778.

I have received your packet dated the 20th February through Messrs. Leogene and Company, to whom I have paid the carriage, according to your orders. After my departure from Paris I arrived at Bordeaux in three days ; our carriage broke down on the way, which delayed us six hours, and we were obliged to have another, which delayed us four hours more, and then we left for Bayonne. Our carriage broke again, but we arrived at Bayonne in a day and a half, and took another, and continued our journey to Spain. After two days we were obliged to leave our carriage and mount mules, the roads being too bad, and the snow on the mountains being six to seven feet deep ; but we arrived at Corunna altogether in seventeen days. The courier took me to the French Consul, who informed me that the frigate had arrived six days before. Every one seemed very anxious to know who I was, and what I was doing, and the general asked me why I had come with the courier. I told him that I had met him on the road from Paris, going to Bordeaux, and that I went along with him, and that the vessel in which I counted on embarking for Boston having left, I had been informed that it had arrived at Fourroye, near Corunna. He was perfectly satisfied. I expect to embark this evening, and to disguise myself in such a manner that nobody will know what has become of me. Messrs. Leogene render me every possible service, and have begged me to look



upon their house as my own. They have told me that Captain Cunningham and Mr. Hodge were at Bilboa, and that they expected them at Corunna. I am, with respect, &c.,

[HARMAN COURTER.]

*Stevens's Facsimiles, No. 801.*

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TO JONATHAN WILLIAMS.

Paris, 15<sup>th</sup> March, 1778.

DEAR SIR,—I received yours of the 10<sup>th</sup> yesterday, and must ask you to send up a Copy of the Bills of Lading of the two friends [Deux Amis] Cargo, which is wanted on account of the formality used in some places, as to insurances; send them inclosed to Mess<sup>rs</sup> Sabbatier, fils & Desprez, who act for my Brother's house here, under cover to me, and I will examine, seal and Deliver them. I think that M<sup>r</sup> Lee's Conduct in appointing Deputies under him is very curious. Doctor Franklin not only told him he would have nothing to do with it, but that he should advise you not to do any thing in the affair. What the Commissioners will do in future I know not, but as M<sup>r</sup> Lee never has had any Commission, and most probably never will, I consider his conduct not only as very extraordinary, but unjust towards the Gentlemen he appoints; for surely M<sup>r</sup> Lee cannot expect to be at one and the same time Ambassador at Vienna & Berlin, Commercial Agent in France, and Alderman of London. This is having several coats on at once, and an old Gown into the Bargain. The truth is, he apprehends very little profit to be had in the negotiating business, and, to help the matter out, means to share the Commissions here and keep the Commercial Agency in reserve to come back to, after being rated with the Glory of an Imperial Embassy. But the secret Committee, though they nominated him in January, 1777, yet have never sent him any Commis-

sion ; and if they had, it is fairly superceded by his later ones, which are inconsistent with the Trust of the former, and as a new appointment must soon take place, possibly a new arrangement, I cannot advise any friend of mine to meddle in the affair under M<sup>r</sup> Lee ; besides a Partnership in it, for one part only, is a most beggarly affair, and you owe more to yourself than to spend your time at so critical a Period as this is, in acting in a sphere which can render you neither honor nor profit ; you have my opinion with my usual unreservedness. We have news that M<sup>r</sup> Adams, of Boston, is on his way to replace me ; there is no doubt of it, and he may be daily expected ; as it is what I have long since expected, am no way surprized, can only say my friends need be under no anxiety on my account. I have long since wished to retire from Public employ, and had wrote to that purpose to my friends in Congress, and as I can now do it with a degree of honor which my Enemies never dreamt of, The triumph will be mine not theirs ; however, I will not begin until I am out of the field. I wish, if possible, to see the settlement of your accounts before I leave Europe, but I fear shall not be able, unless ready very soon. I wish it to give care in some points, both to you and Doctor Franklin, as well as myself. In every station I shall always be happy in your Correspondence and Friendship, & am, &c.,

SILAS DEANE.

M<sup>r</sup> Williams.

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO JOHN ROSS.

Paris, 15 March, 1778.

DEAR SIR,—I wrote you in such haste a few days since, that I kept no Copy, so must refer to my last without mentioning its Date, since which I am favoured with yours of the 3<sup>d</sup>, on receipt of which, I sent M<sup>r</sup> Lee an extract of that Part in which you mention his having examined the Papers, and the insinuation given



out at Nantes in consequence, and Demanded an Explanation, to which I have the following answer: "The Question you give me in your Letter of yesterday from one of M<sup>r</sup> Ross's to you, as far as it relates to me, is totally groundless; this is all the explanation I can give you, &c." I should be very happy could I bring my Enemies here into open day, and to lay their accusations and complaints against me formally, in which case I should know what I had to answer to; but this I despair of, for he only who made them can alter their dispositions; it is very hard to be obliged to combat such bush fighting Poltroons, against whom one can never be too much on one's Defence, and never sure for a moment, but I trust soon to Lug them all out in to open day. I have, heretofore, wrote you freely what were my sentiments as to the Papers. The Commissioners, I can answer for two of them, never thought of their being brought to Paris, or of any thing else being done with them than the opening them and dividing them at Nantes. M<sup>r</sup> Lee to justify himself says you treated him ill, even to insolence, on the first opening of the affair, and that your claiming the Papers, &c., prevented any one at Nantes from being willing to take them into custody, which obliged him to bring them up to Paris or leave them in the Public office; this is the substance of what he says here. I will not at present be so particular, as I intend in a few days writing again.

I am, &c.,

SILAS DEANE.

Mr. Ross.

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO ANDREW LIMOZIN.

Paris, 15 March, 1778.

DEAR SIR,—I have before me your favours of the 5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, & 10<sup>th</sup>, insts., for which I most sincerely thank you. I received the last yesterday, which was later than

its courier. I wish to know if there were any Passengers on board either of those Vessels taken. The Papers of M<sup>r</sup> Thomas Morris were taken into the custody of William Lee, Esq<sup>r</sup>. I have never seen them, so cannot answer you. I think the proposed freight of the ship is not too dear; but we have not at present want of her. The Packet from M<sup>r</sup> Bingham I duly received, and thank you for your attention in forwarding it. I must now excuse myself for letting so many of your Letters lye several days unanswered; but I have been confined several days with a Cold, of which I am now recovered. I am, &c.,

SILAS DEANE.

M<sup>r</sup> Limozin.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO MESSRS. CLIFFORD AND TEYSETT.

Paris, March 15, 1778.

GENTLEMEN,—As I have not the honor of any of your Letters for some time since, I conclude the account about the Powder still remains unclosed; I must pray it may be finished at early as possible. In the meantime pray you to send me by return of Post my account Current, as it stood when you paid my Brother, S. Deane, the Ballance. My Brother, who is gone to America, must have it put up among his Papers, if it were ever delivered, and this occasions my troubling you to send it me again. We have nothing from America since the 26 Jan<sup>y</sup>, when everything remained in much the same state as it had for some months before. I have the honor to be, &c.,

SILAS DEANE.

Mess<sup>rs</sup> Clifford & Teysett.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO BROQUIEN.

Paris, March 15, 1778.

DEAR SIR,—I received your Polite Letter of the 28<sup>th</sup> of Feb<sup>y</sup>, and am much obliged to you for the wine.



Your health shall not be forgot, as it is drank at my Table; and though from a new Country like America, I shall not be able to return you anything in kind, yet I hope to have the satisfaction of returning you what will be equally agreeable. If the ships in which your Interest is embarked arrive safe, my Letters will undoubtedly do you service, which is all the reward I wish for, & the greatest satisfaction I can have. I am, &c.,

SILAS DEANE.

M<sup>r</sup> Brouquien.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO MESSRS. TAILLETT AND GOSSELINE.

Paris, March 15, 1778.

GENTLEMEN,—I received inclosed a Letter from Bourdeaux a Bill of Lading signed N. Jacques, for two cases of wine containing 100 bottles of wine in both, to be sent to me at my Hotel, place Louis XV<sup>e</sup>. This is to advise you thereof, and to desire you to forward the wine, when received, to M<sup>r</sup> Leray de Chaumont, ancien Intendant des Invalid, a Passy, on my account, with a note of your Expences, which shall be remitted you. I am, &c.,

SILAS DEANE.

Mess<sup>rs</sup> Taillett, Gosseline & C<sup>o</sup>,  
Merch<sup>ts</sup> at Rouen.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO JONATHAN WILLIAMS.

Paris, 16<sup>th</sup> March, 1778.

DEAR SIR,—The quantity of Stores you have on hand, & the difficulty you find in shipping them, induces us to accept of M<sup>r</sup> Monthieu's proposal of taking his Goods out of the Mercury, and loading intirely with the Stores of the public. M<sup>r</sup> Monthieu has made that offer, taking the same rate of Freight for the whole as was agreed for the quantity actually loaded already. We shall not be able to see M<sup>r</sup> Monthieu before the Post goes

to Day, but shall be able to write you particularly by Wednesday's post. We are, &c.,

B. FRANKLIN,  
SILAS DEANE.

Mr. Williams.

*Thomas Mss.*

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FROM WILLIAM LEE.

Chaillot, Monday 16<sup>th</sup> March, 1778.

SIR,—In your Letter received late last Saturday Night you express your surprise at my asking for a literal and attested copy of such parts of M<sup>r</sup> Ross's late letters as related to me, meaning that the copy should be attested by you or any one else who read the Original. I cannot help thinking such surprise wou'd never have existed had you attended to your former Letter, where, in a very material part you give me your explanation only of what M<sup>r</sup> Ross writes, and not his own words ; and I still think, as M<sup>r</sup> Ross's letters are look'd upon by you as charges against me, that you cannot in Justice refuse to give me a literal copy of his own expressions. Upon a revisal of your own conduct on former occasions you will find that your sentiments were not always the same relative to private correspondence as expressed in your Letter.

You have much misconceived what I said to you the other day relative to the sale of prizes being taken out of the hands of M<sup>r</sup> Morris and myself as Commercial Agents and put into those of M<sup>r</sup> Williams, contrary to the appointment of the Secret Committee. I only meant to inform you that I was mistaken, not "Grossly deceived," in attributing that act to you solely, because I was then satisfied that D<sup>r</sup> Franklin had taken his share in the transaction. But it is not an exculpation of the action that you were only a Copartner in it. I always tho't the act wrong, and shall continue to think so until you show me good authority for doing it, and good reason for throwing such a slur on my character, thereby



in great measure incapacitating me to render that service to my Country which I wish'd to do, when, on the appointment of the Secret Committee, I gave up a very respectable station which was for Life, and sacrificed no inconsiderable part of my private fortune to enter upon their business. You had M<sup>r</sup> Morris's sentiments and mine on the subject in our Joint Letter to you and D<sup>r</sup> Franklin, and mine farther in my particular Letters to you. The transaction appears to me a reflection on the Committee and an Injury to M<sup>r</sup> Morris and myself, totally unmerited, I am sure, on my part, and that Injury aggravated by repeatedly promising many months ago to recall M<sup>r</sup> Williams's appointment, which has never, that I know of, been complied with. As such I have ever mention'd it, and you know have wrote about it, tho' not so fully as to yourself.

Insinuations or opinions I shall decline taking notice of, especially when coming from M<sup>r</sup> Ross, but if you have any explicit charge against me, either written or *viva voce* evidence, you will always find me ready to give an explicit and satisfactory answer. I have the Honour to be, with Respect, Sir,

Y<sup>r</sup> most Obed<sup>t</sup> H<sup>ble</sup> Serv<sup>t</sup>,

W. LEE.

To The Hon<sup>ble</sup> Silas Deane, Esq<sup>r</sup>,  
Rue Royale Place Louis XV., Paris.

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO ANDREW LIMOZIN.

Paris, 16<sup>th</sup> March, 1778.

DEAR SIR,—I wrote yesterday in answer to yours of the 5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup> & 10<sup>th</sup>, and make my excuse for not replying sooner yours of the 13<sup>th</sup>, I this moment received. You have just reason to take ill my not answering sooner yours conveying M<sup>r</sup> Bingham's packets, but I have, in addition to what I said yesterday, to tell you, by way of apology, that the Packets containing nothing more than a Number of American News papers were really, in the

hurry of my affairs, and my then ill state of health, forgot for some Days. I can by no means be easy to lose your Correspondence through any fault of mine, and therefore have stated the affair briefly as it is. I have the honor to remain,

Dear Sir, Yours, &c.,

SILAS DEANE.

*Thomas Mss.*

Mr Limozin.

To ———

Passy, 18<sup>th</sup> March, 1778.

SIR,—In consideration of M. Le Blanc's misfortunes, I gave him fifty Louis D'Orrs, and promised to represent his Case to the Congress, with which he, on his part, promised to remain satisfied until he could hear from America. To my very great surprise, instead of abiding by his Engagements, he has applied to an Avocat, and threatens me with a process at Law. This Conduct of M. Le Blanc's obliges me to consider him in a very different Light from what I have hitherto done, and if he persists in it I shall lay the whole before the Minister under whose protection I have the honor to be. You will excuse my writing you in English, as I choose to express myself so as to satisfy myself that what I write may not be misunderstood.

I have the honor to remain, &c.,

SILAS DEANE.

*Thomas Mss.*

FROM JOHN ROSS.

Nantes, 19<sup>th</sup> March, 1778.

DEAR SIR,—I had but just time to mention by last post receipt of a letter from Robert Morris, Esq<sup>r</sup>, The original of which accompanys Several others (not as yet come to hand), which regards the business of Willing, Morris & Co. with their European Friends. Among



the number it appears there is a letter for you from Robert Morris, Esq<sup>r</sup>, recommending a Settlement with me of the Joint Adventures in which you engaged the house or him in. Nor do I doubt but it would be equally agreeable to you to have an end put to those matters previous to your departure from Europe. If so I shall be glad, with conveniency, you enumerate them and their fate, especially if you approve of bringing those concerns to a Settlement here.

Whether instructions has as yet reached the Hon<sup>ble</sup> Commissioners or not, am now firmly of opinion the Committee of Congress depended on them, and still does, to afford me every assistance to discharge my engagements in Europe for the United States. Yet, as I have already addressed you on this subject previous to my knowledge of their Sentiments, shall not write the Hon<sup>ble</sup> Commissioners until I receive your answer to mine of 14<sup>th</sup> Inst. Robert Morris, Esq<sup>r</sup>, one of the Committee of Congress, writes under date 30<sup>th</sup> December last, as follows, viz. : " You tell me you shall soon forward goods and Invoices, compleating all the orders you have received, and that the amount will exceed either your or my expectations. Now, I have all along expected that you wou'd send the goods to fulfill the first as soon as you could, that you would execute the Second as fast as you received remittances for that account particularly, and all those remittances that were for that purpose enumerated particularly in my letter of 9<sup>th</sup> July. The other order from the Secret Committee I never did expect you would execute, unless the Commercial agent or Commissioners at Paris supplied you with Funds for that purpose. It is true the Committee directed the Commercial agent to do it, but the remittances they have made fell so much short of what they expected at that time to make that I long since gave up the Idea of your executing that order, unless the Commissioners shou'd agree to supply you, and this I suppose they will do, of course. You are not to expect further remittances from the Committee."

I think the preceeding will Sufficently explain the intentions of the Secret Committee, and that I have thereby a right to call on the Hon<sup>ble</sup> Commissioners in consequence thereof, having executed completely every part of their Several orders, as I shall explain to the entire satisfaction of the Commissioners. By this you are also to observe that am to expect no remittances on account of the Public; consequently, what I received already from the Commissioners to be refunded on remittances coming to my hands must be carried to account of the United States with them, and to the Credit of the said United American States with me, including what I may further receive to pay off my engagements. So soon as I hear from you, shall address the Hon<sup>ble</sup> Commissioners, and am happie to think if my purchases get safe to hand, the Committee will be satisfied the public money has been as attentively laid out on their account as if the property had been my own in particular. The Agent or Agents never hinted their being possessed of any orders to make advances to me. If they had, it's known well enough by you they have had it not in their power Since I received this last order for the Woolens, &c. Let me beg to hear from you in Course, and I am very Respectfully, Dear Sir,

Your most obed<sup>t</sup> Serv<sup>t</sup>,

JN<sup>o</sup> ROSS.

The Hon<sup>ble</sup> Silas Deane, Esq<sup>r</sup>

*Thomas Mss.*

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FROM JOHN ROSS.

Nantes, 19<sup>th</sup> March, 1778.

THE HON<sup>BLE</sup> SILAS DEANE.

DEAR SIR,—Since I sealed the inclosed your favour of the 15<sup>th</sup> came to my hand, but the preceeding letter wrote a few days before, to which you referr me, never came to hand. Yet I scarce knew of any letters of mine miscarry, & wonder what has become of that mentioned now by you. I hope, however, to hear



from you soon as you advise, when I should be glad of the Sentiments of the Commissioners on the Subject of M<sup>r</sup> Morris's papers.

M<sup>r</sup> Lee's assertions are consistent, altho Insolent ; his representation of my ill treatment to him is false, untill he engaged in the unwarrantable exercise of his expedition here to make discoveries Injurious to the honour & reputation of Men of Character. Nor had I afterwards any degree of intercourse with the man, but giving him my Sentiments freely in writing, which he has engaged to Lay before Congress himself, to be publicly read before the whole Body.

Had I not this under his hand, I dare say he would deny it, so that I am sensible nothing but proof can fix any thing on this crafty, prying Creature. I am particularly happie you are prepared to encounter your Enemys. I hope the malevolence of certain Characters may retort on themselves. I once thought I could keep myself quite disengaged from having any disputes, but impossible it seems without a tame submission to what a man of honour & principle could never reconcile. Neither will I submit to see distant Friends insulted, by such daring attempts on their Character.

Time obliges me to cut short and to conclude this with assuring you that I am, Dear Sir,

Your very obed<sup>t</sup> Serv<sup>t</sup>,  
J<sup>N</sup><sup>o</sup> ROSS.

The Hon<sup>ble</sup> Silas Deane.

*Thomas M<sup>ss</sup>.*

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TO JOHN ROSS.

DEAR SIR,—Yours of the 17<sup>th</sup> is before me ; I refer you to mine of the 15<sup>th</sup> for my sentiments on the affair of the papers, & have only to add on that head that I think it would be proper for you to make of M<sup>r</sup> Alderman a formal demand of them in the name of the house, & inform him that you shall protest against their being detained & leave him to answer

the consequences, and that you address the Commissioners at the same time, praying some mode may be taken for obtaining relief. I really do not see what else you can do, as this litigious man has contrived things; he is a Lawyer as he thinks, he has all the dispositions in the world for one, but it is needless for me to say any thing of or about him to you or to any one else that has ever had any concerns with him. I have received a letter from M<sup>r</sup>. Robt. Morris, who has fully justified the good opinion and esteem I have ever had for him. I have constantly wrote him since my receiving his letter, which you refer to, in the same friendly way as usual. Indeed, when I answered his Letter of the 29<sup>th</sup> June, which he calls his unfortunate letter, in his to me of the 29<sup>th</sup> Dec<sup>r</sup>, I told him I should continue my friendship for him and my correspondence with him, as usual, until I found he continued to justify his brother's conduct; after which, should it be the case, all connections between us must cease, but happily find him undeceived. I refer you to M<sup>r</sup>. Williams, to whom I have wrote about our reception here, as I have no time for a long letter. In answer to yours of the 12<sup>th</sup>, I hardly know what to say. M<sup>r</sup>. A. Lee's letters to Spain appear to me very extraordinary; he is Commissioner, it is true, to enter into a Treaty with that Court, but how this gives him any right to meddle with the disposition of prizes I cannot conceive. I have said nothing to him yet, unwilling to disturb the joy & festivity which prevails; but before I go for America, I must have an explanation on several subjects, & that among the rest. The truth is, he imagines there has been some money made in the Cruize. I shall be much obliged to you to send me up, if not already done, the extracts you mention. I am, D<sup>r</sup>. Sir,

Your most ob<sup>t</sup> & very hble Serv<sup>t</sup>,  
SILAS DEANE.

Paris, March 21<sup>st</sup>, 1778.  
Mr. Ross.

*Thomas Mss.*



## TO JONATHAN WILLIAMS.

DEAR SIR,—I received yours of the 14<sup>th</sup>. I consulted Dr. Franklin on the subject of your credit with M<sup>r</sup> Grand, when he was of opinion that the best way would be for you to continue drawing for what you are still in arrears, and your bills on their being presented to the Commissioners will be accepted. I thought he had wrote you before this on the subject, or I should not have been silent myself. Your draughts on Mess<sup>rs</sup> Geradot, Haller & Co., shall be duly honored, and I hope very soon to receive the Accounts compleated. You will, before this comes to hand, receive orders for loading the Mercury solely on the public account; will she take the whole that remains on hand? as you complained of the size of some of Monthieu's cloaths, I must pray you to bring up with you a sample of each size, that so justice may be done. I will now give you my opinion as to the monies refunded for the prizes, and it is that you are legally, as well as every other way, justly entitled to a Commission on the whole, and I shall insist on its being allowed you. The bill for 5,000 Livres accepted must be your security for this. As to the payment being made by M<sup>r</sup> Chaumont, it could not be avoided as affairs are situated. The giving up those prizes and afterwards paying so amply for them was in every part of it a transaction a little extraordinary, and they who had been principal actors in it imagined that by refunding in that way it would be less public. I own I do not think so, but they who had the power to give or to retain the money were absolutely masters of the mode. I know not of any advantage M<sup>r</sup> Chaumont can make except the usual commission, as he must pay the proprietors in sterling or an equivalency. I foresee great advantages will be taken by those who receive the first news of the repayment, as the whole is considered in America as desperate; for myself I have had some trouble in the affair, but never expected any reward; what I did was in the way of my

duty, in my station. My Letter of the 15<sup>th</sup> will give you my sentiments on M<sup>r</sup> Lee's arrangement of deputies under him ; he talks of setting out in a day or two. Yesterday was a glorious day for America. The Commissioners were received publickly at Court, followed by all the Americans at Paris. I leave it to others to give you a minute detail ; in one word, every body appear'd pleased. The Treaties have been announced at London. Lord Stormont went off yesterday without taking leave. The Marquis d'Noiailles is on his way from London ; the King of England sent a very violent message to both houses of Parliament on Tuesday Last. The Lords voted an Address that they would stand by him with their lives and fortunes. The house of Commons were left debating on the address at 1 o'Clock, Wednesday morning, when the express left London, but there was no Doubt they would vote the same way, and you may expect every moment to hear of War. This is the News ; fortunately for me my Commission here is compleatly, I may say honorably, executed in every part of it, before my recall has formally arrived. I find that M<sup>r</sup> Robert Morris, convinced of his error, has treated me generously in my absence ; this raises him much in my Esteem and endears him the more to me, as I find so few persons acting such a part. Once more I cannot advise you to act under the Alderman. I wish I could see you before I leave Europe, but I fear it will be impossible. I propose returning immediately and (accidents excepted) will be here again next Autumn. M<sup>r</sup> C[armichael] is, I understand, appointed Secretary ; he likely will return soon, and I wish for many reasons to see him in America. When you come to Paris, Dr. Bancroft will acquaint you what kind of Correspondence he [Carmichael] kept up in America, whilst professing the greatest friendship for me ; after which you will not be surprised at his appointment nor at my recall, though you must be shocked exceedingly at his conduct, which I now hint to you for your own



reflections, and having it in my power, shall, unless he give me satisfaction, expose him to the world, not only in America, but in Europe. Neither Congress nor any individual have ever informed of one word of Complaint against me, or any part of my conduct. I am, therefore, wholly in the Dark. I am, indeed, told in the resolve of Congress, that I am sent for, to give Congress an account of the situation of their affairs in Europe, they being in the greatest distress for want of Intelligence. I am under no apprehensions, but that this will turn out greatly to my advantage every way, and that I shall be able to retire with honor. I know you will be glad to find this to be the Case, as I am sure that you interest yourself in what affects me as a friend. Your appointment at Nantes has been strangely represented in America by Pennet, the late Thomas Morris, and others of the Cabal at Nantes, as well as by both the Lee's here; the latter have artfully endeavored, to separate Dr. Franklin from me in the affair, and have represented me, as the only acting person. This makes me ask of you to draw up a brief Narration of the whole from your first going to Nantes. That is the time you went, the Errand you went upon, at whose desire you have ever since continued in the business; please also to say one word on the affair of the Magazine, that is, whether it will be a profitable affair or not, as that has also, I hear, been made use of; if possible let me know this in a fortnight at furthest.

I will not add as I must write you again very soon, but congratulate you on the happy turn of our affairs.

I am, Dear Sir, most sincerely yours,

SILAS DEANE.

Mr. Williams.

To-morrow we are to be introduced to the Queen and Royal family. Yesterday we were introduced to all the ministers, after being introduced to the King.

Paris, 21<sup>st</sup> March, 1778.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO JOHN ROSS.

DEAR SIR,—Yours of the 19<sup>th</sup> came safe to hand, and I now return you M<sup>r</sup> Robert Morris's letter. The death of his unhappy brother is the most fortunate event that could have happened, considering the inveterate habits which had got master of him ; it must, however, affect our friend. I have already wrote you my sentiments as to the papers of M<sup>r</sup> Thomas Morris, and wish M<sup>r</sup> Lee would do what I think may be very easily done, & which I could, I think, prevail with almost every person to do ; but this man knows so much, and suspects so much more, that I will never have anything to do with him, or to say to him, if I can avoid it. Pray inform me what account M<sup>r</sup> Morris gives you of affairs in Congress. I do not like his absence from it, and I wish to know what has been the complaint against me, for I have not received one word on the subject either from Congress or my particular friends. As to M<sup>r</sup> Morris's affairs with me, they are in a very narrow compass. M<sup>r</sup> Delap fitted out a Brigantine, one third on his own, one third on M<sup>r</sup> Morris's, and one third on my account. This vessel was taken, and M<sup>r</sup> Delap has charged each of us separately with one third loss. M<sup>r</sup> Chaumont equipped a large Ship and Cargoe, in which I engaged jointly with M<sup>r</sup> Morris for 100,000 Livres. The vessel arrived safe, and to a good market, but no returns are yet come to hand. I have on this paid Ten thousand Livres, and given my Notes for the rest. The Cargo is insured, and a profit on this adventure is certain. These two are all our adventures, except the unfortunate one with Capt. Bell, the loss on which is to be equally shared between M<sup>r</sup> Beaumarchais, M<sup>r</sup> Eyries of Havre, Mess<sup>rs</sup> Willing, Morris & Co., M<sup>r</sup> Thomas Morris, and myself. I advanced what money was advanced by a credit given me on Mons<sup>r</sup> Satelier, in consequence of 86 hhds of tobacco received by Plainne, Pennet & Co., who afterwards wickedly converted the avails of the Tobacco to their own use, and ordered Sothier to charge



the money advanced to me to the Commissioners at large. M<sup>r</sup> Morris advanced some money also, and it will be impossible to bring this matter to a final settlement whilst M<sup>r</sup> Morris's papers are locked up. These are all the affairs in which I have involved M<sup>r</sup> Morris, and on the whole he will be undoubtedly a gainer. I find it necessary for me to be in America as soon as possible, where I mean not to make any stay longer than to satisfy myself as what is, and has been doing. After which I shall return immediately, and close as soon as possible every account I have in Europe. I am, with much respect,

Sir, your most ob<sup>t</sup> & very hble. Serv<sup>t</sup>,  
 SILAS DEANE.

Paris, 23<sup>d</sup> March, 1778.  
 M<sup>r</sup> Ross.

*Thomas Mss.*

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JOHN ROSS TO ARTHUR LEE.

Nantes, 23<sup>d</sup> March, 1778.

THE HON<sup>BLE</sup> ARTHUR LEE, ESQ<sup>R</sup>.

SIR,—I had the honour to receive yours of 18<sup>th</sup> Inst. by yesterday's post, and am particularly pleased to be possessed of it, being in a style very different from what I really expected from you in your high station, & very inconsistent with the part to be acted, to remedy the injurys which the detention of those papers seized & carried off threaten.

The investigation of the subject being no less instructive than nice and curious, it would be presumption in me even to hint an opinion, much less to exercise my Judgment without Co-operating with Your's and your Brothers, distinguished as you both are (according to your own observation) to the highest trusts and respectability by that Government of which I profess myself a Subject.

You may depend, Sir, I shall never, am in hopes, be wanting in that decency & respect due to your public

Characters, Yet I cannot help being of opinion, whether I have the honour to be joined by you or not, that it is no less incumbent on the most exalted Characters to pursue & preserve that line of duty only which command respect, attention, and honour in the appointment & trusts assigned them.

In the particular Character of Commercial Agent I addressed your Brother, not to contend his appointment, nor with any view of treating him disrespectfully, but because he acted in a line diametrically Opposite to what his Commercial Agency Authorized; he has not been insulted or abused by me (or by any other person, as far as I know) in the exercise of his office, But by himself, & by those connected with him, in forwarding this expedition, if any.

It is very true that I did not recollect then the high station of the first Rank you now remind me of, quitted by your Brother in the first Commercial City in the World, on the Call of the Committee; if it really had occurred to me, it would have had no more weight then than now, from a moral certainty & conviction, in many instances, that he never would quit that great Theatre of Commerce without the prospect of far Superior advantages than he ever could realize from his business or knowledge in it as a merchant. Thus and the several other arguments used in your epistle to point out merit where nothing is due, and Support a right inconsistent with his appointment, rather fixes me in the Opinion well known to him. As such, I shall not be deterred by the threats of prosecutions from acting the part of a Friend to M<sup>r</sup> Morris, whose distant situation could only encourage M<sup>r</sup> Lee, or any other, to assume a stretch of that Liberty at this very instant contended for, & by which he and many others are Supported without suffering, or feeling the Calamities of thousands in that Country from which he derives it.

Should my conduct in offering my sentiments so fully be scrutinized, and that I am found Culpable, I shall not only submit Chearfully to every Consequence, but think



myself likewise bound to do the utmost Justice to any person injured by that want of decency & decorum in me, which you have been pleased to particularize so freely.

The several questions you ask me, I shall probably think it my duty to answer at some future period. Neither do I conceive it necessary at present to animadvert on your happy turn of thought, except to remark that the subterfuge to alleviate & evade the Consequences is correspondent with the Act, and a poor one to subvert Common Sense, or divert the Currant from its proper Channel. Your ingenuity and quickness in changing the Scene to make me the Criminal in a business which the Authors and Performers are ashamed to avow, afford me the Opportunity of a natural & conclusive inference, the assiduity and intention being nevertheless the same; Your Brother's trouble deserves every acknowledgement from the injured & insulted.

The quotation from my Letter of 22<sup>d</sup> July, 1777, to M<sup>r</sup> Deane was unnecessary on the present occasion; his appointment I gave full Credit to, and wrote to have the public business attended to; on seeing the Cover of a letter with M<sup>r</sup> Morris, Addressed to the Joint Agents, He assumed a power very different from what any Such letter from the Committee could contain, to wit: the Seizeing & Searching of papers & correspondence with which he had no connection, under the cover of the Commercial appointment. How far this evidence refutes my assertions need no great explanation.

Whenever the Hon<sup>ble</sup> Commissioners Judges it proper to demand Copys of the Invoyses of the goods shipped by me, they shall be furnished, and I shall be extremely glade; they may think themselves Authorized to make a regulare final Settlement with me of all the business done by me in Europe for the public, and discharging me. Nay, am ready to Setle with the Commercial Agent, or with you both (if you mean Yourself and him in this present application), if possessed of powers Jointly or Separately from the Committee of Congress. If

neither of you have any, permit me to ask, with what propriety is this demand made? As to the money paid by You, which you take notice of in particulare, it is the Money of the American United States, and applyed with as much fidelity as any intrusted to you or the Commercial Agent. The repeated applications of your Brother, & this of yours now, without the least Authority, Jointly or Seperately, implies motives inconsistent with liberal minds, Such as You'l find I despise, as being out of the reach of the most invidious, as far as it regards the discharge of any trusts reposed in me. Shou'd you, therefore, think these, my sentiments, indecent or desrepectfull, it is to be imputed to Yourself only, not to me, as You must, upon cool reflections, acknowledge to be the Effects of an Unauthorized requisition of me, out of the Line of that duty assigned to you Jointly (or separately) with your Brother.

I have the honour to be, with the great respect due by, Sir, Your very obedient Serv<sup>t</sup>,

J<sup>N</sup>° ROSS.

*Lee Papers, Harvard University.*

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FROM JOHN ROSS.

Nantes, 23<sup>d</sup> March, 1778.

DEAR SIR,—I had but just time to acknowledge receipt of your favour 15<sup>th</sup> inst., by the Saturday's post, when I advised my not receiving your Letter a few days preceeding to which am referred by you, altho' none of my letters hitherto known to me miscarry in their Kingdom. At present shou'd not have troubled you had I not received by yesterday's post a letter from your Colleague, the Hon<sup>ble</sup> Arthur Lee, on the Subject of M<sup>r</sup> Morris's papers. For your perusal I copy the following paragraph, viz.: "I can answer for my Brother and myself, that we expected as much to find treason in the Bible as in the papers you mention. The knowledge of its being necessary to take possession of those papers



was not of our seeking ; it was forc'd upon us by M<sup>r</sup> Deane's letter, and it was my opinion that M<sup>r</sup> Lee cou'd not refuse to go to Nantes for that purpose without being chargeable with a Criminal Neglect of his duty." This representation of M<sup>r</sup> Lee's not by any means corresponding with those of your own letters to me on the Subject, I think it my duty to make it known to you. You'll please to observe that M<sup>r</sup> Lee not only answers for himself, but for his Brother ; that the Suspicions did not originate with them, being totally ignorant of the Necessity to take possession of them until forced upon them by your Letter. This I take to be the literal sense of that part of M<sup>r</sup> Lee's letter. As such, If I may use the freedom to give my opinion, I conceive it now incumbent upon you to do Justice, not only to M<sup>r</sup> Morris and his connections, but to yourself previous to your leaving Europe, least the detention of those papers, not useful to the ends of Seizeing them, incurr particular injurys to the private concerns of Willing Morris & Co. It is still the more necessary to pay some attention to it immediately on your part, as I have reason to Suspect from the Comm<sup>rs</sup> not answering any of my letters (altho' acquainted with the papers being carried off by M<sup>r</sup> Lee), they are inclined to take no concern in the matter. Yet the Hon<sup>ble</sup> Arthur Lee writes me his Brother acted in every respect consistent with his duty, and under the sanction of the Hon<sup>ble</sup> Commissioners.

Your last to me shows you expected M<sup>r</sup> Lee wou'd open & divide the papers, but the Commissioners never thought of their being brought to Paris. Before you concurred in opening or dividing the papers, You surely ought to consider the ends it was to answer, and the authority by which M<sup>r</sup> Lee cou'd undertake the measure in the Clandestine manner it was conducted.

Both M<sup>r</sup> Lee and you knew there was not a single paper under those seals which he cou'd claim, even under the Idea of public, that cou'd be rendered useful to him in the Settlement of public business. Nor do I believe him possessed of the least power at this Instant

to act in the Line of his Commercial Agency. How farr I may be right or wrong in this will be seen by and bye, in the advantages to the United States of America by the possession of them, under cover of that duty which wou'd be considered as Criminal did he neglect it.

I need not make any observations on the poor, Silly subterfuge of my ill treating him, even to Insolence, in justification of himself. There is nothing I said to him on the Subject but he has under my hand, which he wrote me shou'd be laid before Congress and publicly read. Those better acquainted with me than any of the Hon<sup>ble</sup> Commissioners know that am not capable of Insolence or ill treatment to any man of Character and principle, acting with that openness and Candour as a man of business and in the line of duty. I am, with due respect, Dear Sir,

Your very obed<sup>t</sup> Serv<sup>t</sup>,

JN<sup>o</sup> ROSS.

The Hon<sup>ble</sup> Silas Deane, Esq<sup>r</sup>

*Thomas Mss.*

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CARON DE BEAUMARCHAIS TO CONGRESS.

A Messieurs Les Honnorables Membres du Congrès Général.

Paris, ce 23 Mars, 1778.

Messieurs,—Après avoir felicité mon pays et le Votre sur l'utile et noble alliance que la france vient de contractée avec l'amerique, Je dois à la verité, é l'honneur de M<sup>r</sup> Deane et au mien, la declaration suivante dont je le prie d'etre le porteur auprès de Vous.

Quoique je ne sois connu de vous, Messieurs, que sous le nom de Rodriguez Hortales, qui est la Signature adoptie par moi pour voiler jusqu'a ce moment mes operations de Commerce avec vous, mon nom est Caron de Beaumarchais, Long tems avant que M<sup>r</sup> Deane arrivât en france, J'avais formé le projet d'élever une maison de Commerce puissante et assez zelée pour braver les risques de la mer et de la guerre et vous porter, les



munitions, et marchandises pour l'habillement de vos troupes, dont J'apprenois que vous aviez le plus grand besoin.

Je parlai de ce plan à Londres a M<sup>r</sup> Arthur Lee et, non seulement je lui demandai, s'il avait quelque moyen d'établir ce Commerce entre vous et moi ; mais Je lui écrivis de France que s'il pouvait me faire donner l'assurance que de retours en denrées de votre Continent viendraient promptement acquitter mes envois et me fournir de nouveaux moyens de vous servir encore ; je pourrais peut-être échauffer le zèle de quelques amis fort riches et les réunir à moi pour fonder ce Commerce avec vous.

M<sup>r</sup> Lée me répondit, que les retours en Tabac mettraient bien de la lenteur dans les Operations, si je les exigeais promptement, mais qu'il me conjurait d'envoyer toujours, en attendant, mes munitions et marchandises. Je lui repliquai que m'étant adressé, même aux puissances, pour obtenir qu'on entrât secrètement dans mes vues par des Avances considérables et n'ayant pu l'obtenir, je venois tout simplement de former une Compagnie Commerceante, qui se joindrait à moi, pour ces envois, aux Conditions des retours, le plus prochains de la part de l'Amérique. M<sup>r</sup> Lée n'ayant plus répondu à cette Lettre, je travaillais seul, Messieurs, à la formation de cette Compagnie, lorsque Mr. Deane est venu en France. Du moment de son arrivée, je n'eus plus de Correspondance avec aucun autre. J'entrai en conférence sérieuse avec lui seul et c'est d'après les soins qu'il se donna conjointement avec moi, les pouvoirs de vous qu'il me communiquer, les détails qu'il m'a fourni les demandes expresses qu'il me fit de marchandise et de munitions de guerre, et ses promesses reiterées que pour (vous) payeriez nos envois par des retours très prompts, que j'ai enfin déterminé mes amis à me confier des fonds suffisans pour les premieres mises-hors.

C'est donc avec lui seul, Messieurs, que j'ai traité de vos Interêts, c'est lui seul qui agissant en votre nom à fait tous les travaux propres à lever les difficultés, qui

s'elevraient de toutes partes et sans la Confiance que nous avons eu en des (ses) promesses, peutêtre n'aurois je jamais reussi a donner l'existence a cette Enterprize, qui n'etait avant son arrivée qu'un projet, encore douteux et de chancelant.

Quoique les retours auxquels, il s'etoit engegé en vôtre nom ne soient pas arrivés dans le temps promis, et que cela nous ait mis dans d'asses grands embarras, nous ne lui en avons jamais fait des Reproches, parceque nous l'en avons vu plus affligé que nous mêmes. Mais J'ose vous assurer, Messieurs, que sans les peines continuelles qu'il a prises pour soutenir nôtre Confiance contre la lenteur de vos retours, J'aurais peutêtre eu la douleur de me voir forcé par mes amis d'abandonner une entreprize qui ne presentait que des dangers, sans presque aucun espoir de benefice.

Lorsqu'il m'entretins de l'Etat des forces de l'Amérique, je me rappelai que M<sup>r</sup> Arthur Lée dans ses Lettres avait insisté à ce que je fisse les derniers efforts pour envoyer des Officiers des ingenieurs et des Vaisseaux. Je conseillai donc à M. Deane, qui n'osa pas le prendre sur lui, de former un choix d'Officiers de Genie et de les faire partir sur mes premiers Vaisseaux de Commerce. Quelques Jours apres ayant trouvé moyen d'acheter pour vous de l'Artillerie dans les nombres excedans du Service de nos arcenaux, je lui conseiller encore de joindre aux ingenieurs des Officiers d'Artillerie, qui accompagneraient celle que j'allais vous envoyer. Je le faisais avec d'autant plus d'assurance, que j'avais sous les yeux, la lettre de M<sup>r</sup> Lee, qui portait cette phrases Comment voulez vous que l'Amérique resiste à l'Angleterre si vous ne lui envoyer pas de ingenieurs et des Vaisseaux de Guerre. Ce dernier Article n'etant pas au pouvoir d'une Compagnie commercante, je me contentai travailler à lui procurer les autres. Voila, Messieurs, les vrais motifs qui nous ont déterminé, lui et moi, a vous envoyer des Officiers. Comme je n'ai jamais connu que lui seul, que ma maison n'a jamais eu affaire à aucune autre personne en france et même que



les Autres deutes m'ont souvent refusé jusqu'aux Egards de la plus simple politesse. Je certifie que si mon zele, mes avances d'argent et mes envois de munitions et marchandises ont été agréable au noble Congrès, il en doit de la Gratitude aux soins infatigables que M<sup>r</sup> Deane s'est donné pour toute cette affaire de Commerce.

J'espère que l'honorable Congrès, rejettant toute insinuation par le quelle d'autres personnes voudraient se faire honneur du Succès de nos Affaires, il voudrai bien s'en tenir à la present déclaration de l'homme, le plus en Etat de l'instruire et qui se signe avec respect, Messieurs,

Votres humble et tres obeissant Serviteur pour lui et sa Compagnie,

CARON DE BEAUMARCHAIS,  
 Secretaire du Roi, Lieutenant General de ses  
 Chasses, connu en Amérique sous la maison de  
 Commerce de Rodriquez Hortalez et Comp.

*Thomas Mss.*

#### TRANSLATION.

To the Honorable Members of the General Congress.

Paris, 23d March, 1778.

GENTLEMEN,—After having congratulated my country and yours on the beneficent and grand alliance that France has recently formed with America, I owe to Truth, to the honor of Mr. Deane, and to my own, the following declaration which I have desired him to present to you :

Although I am known to you, Gentlemen, only as Rodrique Hortalez, a signature adopted in order to conceal my commercial operations with you up to the present time, my name is Caron de Beaumarchais.

Long before the arrival of M<sup>r</sup> Deane in France, I had conceived the plan of founding a business firm sufficiently strong and devoted to incur the risques of the sea and of a war, in carrying to you munitions and merchandise, greatly needed by you, as I was informed, for the equipment of your troops.

I spoke to M<sup>r</sup> Arthur Lee, at London, of this project, and not only asked him whether he had any method of securing commercial intercourse between us, but I also wrote to him from France that if he could assure me of the prompt arrival of returns, in the produce of your country, to pay for my shipments and to furnish me anew with the means of serving you, I might perhaps arouse the interest of some exceedingly wealthy friends of mine and obtain their assistance in establishing a commerce.

M<sup>r</sup> Lee replied that if I insisted upon prompt payments in tobacco, these operations would be considerably drawn out, and he besought me to continue sending supplies and stores in the interval. I answered that having applied to the authorities themselves for their clandestine support, in the shape of material advances, and having been refused, I should merely form a trading company to co-operate with me in sending shipments, conditional upon the speediest possible returns from America.

Since M<sup>r</sup> Lee did not reply to my letter, I was endeavoring alone to found this Company when M<sup>r</sup> Deane came to France. From the moment of his arrival, I corresponded with no one else; I conferred with him exclusively, and it is in consequence of our mutual efforts, his powers, which he communicated to me, the details with which he furnished me, and the specific demands he made for supplies and munitions of war, beside his repeated promises that you would meet our shipments with prompt returns, that I prevailed upon my friends to entrust me with sufficient funds for the first disbursements.

Hence it is with him only, Gentlemen, that I have consulted in regard to your interests. He alone, acting in your name, has overcome difficulties arising on every hand; and without the reliance that we have placed in his promises, I should never, very likely, have succeeded in realizing this enterprise, which before his arrival was but a doubtful and undefined plan.



Although the returns pledged by him have not arrived within the time fixed, we have not indulged in reproaches, observing that he was even more distressed than we were ourselves. I venture, however, to assure you, Gentlemen, that had he not continually endeavored to maintain our confidence during this delay, I should perhaps have had the pain of being compelled by my friends to abandon a venture that offered only risk, with scarcely a hope of profit.

Incidental to our conversations relating to the state of the American forces, I recollected that M<sup>r</sup> Arthur Lee, in his letters, had importuned me to spare no efforts to send officers of engineers and ships. I accordingly addressed M<sup>r</sup> Deane, who would not take the responsibility upon himself to select engineers and send them in my first outgoing merchant vessels.

Some days afterwards, having managed to buy artillery for you from among the superfluous pieces in our arsenals, I again advised him to add to the engineers, officers of artillery, who could accompany the ordnance I was forwarding, and this I did with the more confidence, as I had under my eyes the letter from M<sup>r</sup> Lee, containing these words: "How can America combat England, if you do not send engineers and war vessels." As this last item was not within the province of a trading company, I contented myself with endeavoring to obtain for him the others.

These, Gentlemen, were the real motives that determined us both in sending you the officers. As I have never treated with any other, as my firm has never transacted business with another person in France, and as the other Commissioners have ever been lacking in common civility toward me, I testify that if my zeal, my advances of money, and my shipments of supplies and merchandise have been acceptable to the august Congress, their gratitude is due to the indefatigable exertions of M<sup>r</sup> Deane throughout this commercial affair.

I hope that the Honorable Congress, rejecting the

insinuations of others, desirous of appropriating for themselves the credit of our successful operations, will accept in perfect faith the present declaration of the man most capable of enlightening them, and who respectfully signs for himself and his firm, Gentlemen,

Your most obedient and most humble servant,

CARON DE BEAUMARCHAIS.

Secretary of the King and L<sup>t</sup> General of his Hunt, known in America under the title of the Firm, Roderique Hortalez and Company.

COUNT DE VERGENNES TO THE PRESIDENT OF  
CONGRESS.

A Versailles, le 25 Mars, 1778.

MONSIEUR,—M. Deane se disposant à retourner en Amérique, je saise avec plaisir, cette occasion pour rendre témoignage au zèle, à l'activité et à l'intelligence avec les quels il s'est occupé des intérêts des Etats unies ; c'est à ces differens titres qu'il à mérité, l'estime du Roi mon Maitre, et que Sa Majesté à bien voulu lui donner de marques de sa satisfaction.

Au reste M. Deane pourra rendre compte au Congrès, des dispositions ou est le Roi, à l'égard des Etats unies. Les liens qu'ils ont formés, avec Sa Majesté, doivent remplir leurs vœux, le Roi, de son coté est non seulement convaincu qu'ils sont fondés sur des principes inalterables, mais aussi qu'ils contribueront au bonheur des deux peuples.

J'ai l'honneur d'être, avec une très sincere attachement,

Monsieur, votre très humble et très obéissant Serviteur.

DE VERGENNES.

To the President of Congress.



## TRANSLATION.

SIR,—Mr. Deane being about to return to America, I embrace the occasion with pleasure, to give my testimony to the zeal, activity, and intelligence with which he has conducted the interests of the United States, by which he has merited the esteem of the King, my Master, and for which his Majesty has been pleased to give him marks of his satisfaction.

Mr. Deane will be able to inform Congress of the disposition of the King toward the United States ; the engagements formed with his majesty will doubtless satisfy their wishes. The King, on his part, is not only convinced that they are founded on principles unalterable, but also that they will contribute to the happiness of both nations.

I have the honor to be with the most sincere attachment,

Your most humble and obedient servant,

DE VERGENNES.

*Appendix to Deane's Address, 1784, p. 20.*

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FROM COUNT DE VERGENNES.

A Versailles, le 26 Mars, 1778.

Comme je ne dois plus, Monsieur, avoir l'honneur de vous voir avant votre depart, je vous prie de recevoir ici mes souhaits pour que votre voyage, soit prompt et heureux, et que vous trouviez dans votre patrie les memes sentimens que vous avez inspirés en France.

Vous n'aviés rien a desirer, Monsieur, de ceux que je vous ai voües et que je vous conserverai autant que je vivrai ; ils vous sont garans du veritable interest que je ne cesserai dans aucun tems de prendre a votre bonheur comme a la prosperite de votre patrie.

Le Roi desirant vous donner un temoignage personnel de la satisfaction qu'il a de votre conduite, m'a chargé d'en informer M. Le President du Con-

grés unis ; c'est l'objet de la lettre que M. Gerard vous remettra pour M. Hancock ; il vous remettra encore une boîte avec le portrait du Roi ; vous ne refuserés pas sans doute d'emporter dans votre patrie l'image de son ami le plus zélé. La preuve est dans faits.

J'ai l'honneur d'être, avec une très sincère considération, Monsieur, votre très humble et très obéissant serviteur.

DE VERGENNES.

M. Deane.

TRANSLATION.

As I am not, sir, to have the honour of seeing you again before your departure, I pray you to receive here my wishes that your voyage may be speedy, short and happy, and that you may find in your own country the same sentiments which you inspired in France.

You need not, Sir, desire any addition to those which I have devoted to you, and which I shall preserve for you to the end of my life ; they will be sureties to you of the true interest which I shall for ever take in your happiness, as well as in the prosperity of your country.

The King, desirous of giving you a personal testimonial of the satisfaction which he has in your conduct, has charged me to communicate it to the President of the Congress of the United States ; this is the object of the letter which Mr. Gerard will deliver you for Mr. Hancock ; he will also deliver you a box with the King's Portrait. You will not, I presume, Sir, refuse to carry to your country the image of its most zealous friend—the proof of this is in facts.

I have the honor to be, with the most sincere consideration, Sir, your most humble and most obedient servant.

DE VERGENNES.

M. Deane.



TO MESSRS. MORELL.

Paris, March 27<sup>th</sup>, 1778.

GENTLEMEN,—I received yours of the 24<sup>th</sup>, also the one referred to of your Brother's. I must be permitted to reply to both at once and the same time; with respect to the appointing Agents or Consuls, it is not in the Power of the Commissioners; but it is probable that if such a measure is adopted, that the Congress will send out Powers for that Purpose, & in that Case your Brother may rely on every good office in my Power. The general Reputation of your House, the Civilities and real service you rendered to M<sup>r</sup> Carmichael justly intitle you to the Confidence and Esteem of the Americans, to whom I shall on all occasions recommend your House. As my Brother is gone out to settle at Petersburg, in Virginia, under the firm of Simeon Deane & Co., permit me in return to ask of you to recommend your friends going that way to his house. We may thus be mutually of service to each other, as I doubt not the Commerce from America to your Port will be very considerable in a short time. I congratulate you on the Departure of M<sup>r</sup> Frazer, and hope that your Port will soon recover its Priviledges. I have the honor to be, &c.,

SILAS DEANE.

Mons<sup>r</sup> Morell.

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Thomas Mss.

TO JOHN ROSS.

Paris, March 27<sup>th</sup>, 1778.

DEAR SIR,—I have before me yours of the 23<sup>d</sup> inst., in which you favour me with a Paragraph from M<sup>r</sup> A. Lee's Letter to you, and are pleased to say yourself "that you now conceive it incumbent on me to do justice not only to M<sup>r</sup> Morris and his Connections, but to myself previous to my leaving Europe," and afterwards say, "both M<sup>r</sup> Lee and yourself knew there was not a single paper under those seals which he could

claim, even under the Idea of Public." I am not answerable for M<sup>r</sup> Lee, but for myself I know no such thing, and had reason to presume from M<sup>r</sup> Morris's being in a public station that some, at least, of his Papers were the Public's. Neither knew I at that time that Alderman Lee had no Commission as Commercial Agent; his taking the office upon him led me to presume that he had. These are all the observations I shall make on your Letter which (I know not from what cause) is in a stile different from those you have heretofore honored me with. In answer to the Paragraph from M<sup>r</sup> Lee, I send you Copy of the Letter I wrote M<sup>r</sup> Lee, which will shew you how far he has a right to say I forced his Brother on the measures he took, of which you Complain. I can have no explanation with M<sup>r</sup> Lee; to attempt it would be to no purpose but to involve myself in a dispute with a man I am determined never to have any farther correspondence with farther than I am forced to. I have done no injustice to M<sup>r</sup> Morris or his connections, nor will I; on the contrary, I have always esteemed him as my friend, and am conscious I have ever been his; therefore, it was proper on your part to have pointed out the injustice you supposed him to have received from me, at the same time that you demanded justice in his behalf. The sealing up the Papers, the bringing them to Paris, nor any any other subsequent Transaction relating to them, never met my approbation; and I am not, therefore, answerable for the Consequences.

I have the honor to remain, with respect, Sir, Your,  
&c.,

SILAS DEANE.

John Ross, Esq<sup>r</sup>

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO CARON DE BEAUMARCHAIS.

Passy, March 29<sup>th</sup>, 1778.

SIR,—I find since you left Paris that it is impossible for me to wait for your Return from Rochfort, before I



set out on my Journey. The Letter you gave me for the Congress, with the Correspondence between you and M<sup>r</sup> Lee when in London, will help to throw Light on some Transactions, which by the Envy of some and the Wickedness of others, have been most strangely misrepresented. It is unhappy that the short time allowed me to prepare for my voyage will not admit of our making at least a general settlement of your accounts ; but the absolute necessity of my setting out immediately, obliges me to leave my other Transactions in the same unsettled state. As the Letters and Treaty sent out some weeks since will fully inform Congress of the state of their affairs in Europe, to know which appears to have been the principal motive of my being sent for, I hope to return to France early in the Fall, immediately after which it shall be my first Business to adjust and settle with you the accounts of your several Expeditions and disbursements for Congress whilst in America. I shall be able to do you that Justice with Congress and my Countrymen in general which you so eminently merit ; and, I flatter myself, be able to remove any ill impressions that may have been made by designing Persons. I doubt not, indeed, but that M<sup>r</sup> De Francy will have already succeeded in a great measure in this, and hope that he will procure you a large Remittance, and that Congress will no longer delay to do Justice to your early and important services in the Cause of American Liberty. After the perplexing and embarrassing Scenes you have had to pass thro', it must give you the most sensible Joy to find the object of your Labors obtained, and to see an Armament going out which will convince America and the World of the sincere Friendship of France, and their Resolution to protect their Liberties and Independance. I again congratulate you on this great and Glorious Event, to which you have contributed more than any other Person. I have requested D<sup>r</sup> Bancroft to wait on you, and to inform you particularly of the Necessity I am under of setting out before you return. I shall improve every Oppor-

tunity of writing to you, and rely on being honored with a continuation of your Correspondence and Friendship. Wishing you may ever be fortunate and happy, I am, with the utmost respect & Gratitude, &c.,

Sir, yours, &c.,

SILAS DEANE.

M<sup>r</sup> Beaumarchais.

*Thomas Mss.*

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FROM CARON DE BEAUMARCHAIS.

à bord du fier Roderique.

le 30 Mars, 1778.

Monsieur et cher ami,—Dans l'inquiétude ou je suis que vous ne soyés déjà parti pour l'Amérique a mon arrivée à Paris, je vous écris a bord du fier Roderique a la rade de Rochefort pour vous reccomandes mes intérêts auprès du comité du commerce et auprès du Congrès général. Personne ne sait mieux que vous avec quel zèle pour les intérêts a l'amérique j'ai avancé et sacrifier ma fortune et celle de mes amis.

La nécessité de ravoir promptement des fonds dont j'ai tant de besoin m'a fait prendre le parti de mettre la cargaison du fier Roderique a la consignation de M. Chevallié negotiant de Rochefort et mon subrécargue en cette partie pour etre vendue a son arrivée au continent, au lieu ne l'envoyer en droiture au Congrès, comme mes autres cargaisons. J'ai néanmoins reccomandé a M. Chevallié d'offrir le préférence au comité du Commerce des objets de cette cargaison qui pourront lui paraitre nécessaires a la république mais, soit que le comité prenne quelque chose ou laisse vendre en entiere ma cargaison, je vous demande de servir et M. Chevaillié et M. de Francy et mon capitaine et tout ce que tient a mes affaires comme j'ai servi les votres et celles du Congrès en Europe.

Si quelque obstacle imprévu avait retardé la compte de 50 mille livres Sterling que j'ai chargé M. de Francy de recevoir du Congrès pour m'acheter des tabacs,



j'attens de votre reconnaissance et de votre amitié que vous ne négligerez rien pour faire terminer tout de suite un objet aussi important. M. Chevallié, porteur de la présente, a reçu de moi l'ordre exprès de solliciter vos bons offices pour tous les objects ou il croira que vous pouvés lui etre utiles et je ne doute pas que vous ne vous fassies un plaisir d'obliger de tout votre pouvoir celui qui ne cessera d'etre avec tout l'attachement possible,

Monsieur et ami,  
 Votre Très humble et très obéissant Serviteur,  
 CARON DE BEAUMARCHAIS.

Endorsed.—“Dear Brother: You'l please to excuse my opening the annex'd letter before I knew anything of your intended or expected return. The letter came to me at Petersburg, and I opened it three weeks since.”

Yrs.,

SIMEON DEANE.

W<sup>m</sup>burg, 19 July, 1778.

*Deane Papers, Conn. Hist. Society.*

#### TRANSLATION.

On board the *Fier Roderique*, Mar. 30, 1778.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—In my anxiety lest upon my arrival at Paris you may have already set out for America, I write on board the *Fier Roderique*, in the bay of Rochefort, to commend to you my interests before the Committee of Commerce and the general Congress. No one understands better than you with what devotion I have advanced money and sacrificed my fortune and that of my friends for the benefit of America.

The necessity of immediately obtaining the funds I so much need has determined me to consign the cargo of the *Fier Roderique* to M. Chevallie[r], a merchant of Rochefort, and my supercargo in that place, to be sold on arrival, instead of forwarding directly to Congress, as were my previous cargoes.

I have nevertheless directed M. Chevallie[r] to offer to the Committee of Commerce the choice of such articles as may seem to them to be wanted for public use ; but whether the Committee take anything, or allow a sale without reserve, I ask you to assist M. Chevallie[r], M. de Francy and my captain, in everything appertaining to my affairs, in like manner as I have promoted yours and those of Congress in Europe. If any obstacle has delayed the receipt of fifty thousand pounds Sterling that I have empowered M. de Francy to receive of Congress, for the purchase of tobacco in my behalf, I expect that, from gratitude and friendship, you will spare no exertion to bring this important matter to a conclusion.

The bearer of this Letter, M. Chevalie[r], has been expressly directed by me to solicit your assistance in any way that he may consider it advantageous ; and I doubt not that you, my friend, will be pleased to oblige to the extent of your ability one who will never cease to be with all possible attachment,

Your very humble and very obedient servant,

CARON DE BEAUMARCHAIS.

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO MESSRS. DELAPS.

Paris, 30<sup>th</sup> March, 1778.

DEAR SIR,—I received yours giving an account of the trouble you have had in the affair of Barton. I am really sorry and vexed at the issue, though sensible you must have done everything in your Power, and have not the less merit for this affair's turning out as it has. I am not as yet favoured with your account, either with me or the Public, but hope it will come to hand in a few days. The Credit of 40,000 Livres given me on Messrs Geradot, Haller & Co. I have made use of the greatest part of, and hope you will on this turn of our affairs soon receive ample remittances from America, as our Commerce will now be open and Protected by



the Marine of France and America United ; as I know you to be a friend to America, I can but congratulate you with my countrymen on this Event, for which I have been long Sollicitous. I shall make a Tour of a few weeks, on which may probably set out in a few days ; please to direct your Letters under cover to D<sup>r</sup> Bancroft, chez M<sup>r</sup> Le Ray de Chaumont, at Passy. I wish to write Sir Robert Findley, but really have not time. I pray you to give my compliments to him.

I have the honor to remain, with the most sincere Esteem, Dear Sir, &c.

SILAS DEANE.

Mess<sup>rs</sup> Delaps.

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO JOHN ROSS.

Passy, March 30<sup>th</sup>, 1778.

DEAR SIR,—I wrote you the 27<sup>th</sup>, in answer to yours of the 23<sup>d</sup>, since which received yours of the , which I communicated to D<sup>r</sup> Franklin. As I no longer act as Commissioner of the United States, you are to expect an answer to the principal parts of your last from those who continue to act. I must, however, say that the not receiving the sums of money advanced you last spring has been a great detriment to our affairs already ; and must, if it continue unpaid, be still more so, unless the Commissioners can find new resources, or have remittances. You strangely mistake the part the Commissioners acted in the affair of M<sup>r</sup> Lee's going to Nantes, nor do I think it is either just, generous, or Politic in you to endeavour to make them Particular in this Transaction. On receiving your Letter acquainting us of the situation of M<sup>r</sup> Morris, and your apprehensions that his Papers, &c., might fall into wrong hands, I wrote M<sup>r</sup> Arthur Lee as follows : "The inclosed Packet came this moment to hand ; other Letters confirm the Extremity in which M<sup>r</sup> Morris was judged to be. I pray you to Communicate the Contents to your

Brother. I have the honor to be," &c. I never dreamed of M<sup>r</sup> William Lee's going to Nantes when I wrote this ; it was a few days before signing the Treaty, and that object engrossed my whole attention. M<sup>r</sup> William Lee resolved to go down as joint commercial agent ; there was a propriety in his going, and though in yours of the 20<sup>th</sup> you say we know there were no papers of the Public's among M<sup>r</sup> Morris's, yet I must tell you that we supposed quite the Contrary, and I still think we had a right to suppose so. At the same time it was presumed, as I wrote you before, that a division of them would be made at Nantes. The affair was so simple that no one could ever have imagined it possible for any one to have found any difficulty in adjusting it ; it was necessary that some one should be empowered by Government to take the management of this affair upon him. M<sup>r</sup> Lee declared it to be his right and his Duty to Execute it, on which a Letter was signed by the Commissioners to the Minister, requesting he might be empowered formally. This, Sir, is the simple and plain state of the part acted by the Commissioners ; and if M<sup>r</sup> Lee had burned the Papers, or committed any other Extravagance in the Execution of his Trust, the Commissioners are by no means accountable. You have before this received my Letter expressing my satisfaction with M<sup>r</sup> Morris's conduct towards me ; nothing now need be said on that subject. As I am about making a little Tour for relaxation, and may be absent some weeks, you will direct your Letters under cov<sup>t</sup> to D<sup>r</sup> Bancroft. The Treaty will probably soon be published ; it is too long to Copy ; but in one word, the Americans are to enjoy all the Privileges in France, which any, even the most favoured foreign nation enjoys. The Treaty is equal, and on the Part of France has been concluded on the most Liberal and generous Principles, and I am sure on the most sincere and just ones on our part, and I think it must be permanent. I am very happy in its being completed ; & that the part I have taken in it has met with the approba-



tion of his Majesty and his Ministers, which they have given me the most honourable assurances of. I doubt not but my conduct will be equally approved of in my own country when fairly laid before them. I have the honor to be, &c.,

SILAS DEANE.

M<sup>r</sup> John Ross.

*Thomas Mss.*

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Passy, near Paris, March 31<sup>st</sup>, 1778.

SIR,—My colleague, M<sup>r</sup> Deane, being recalled by Congress, and no reasons given that have yet appeared here, it is apprehended to be the effect of some misrepresentations from an enemy or two at Paris and at Nantes. I have no doubt that he will be able clearly to justify himself, but having lived intimately with him now fifteen months, the greatest part of the time in the same house, and being a constant witness of his public conduct, I cannot omit giving this testimony, though unasked, in his behalf, that I esteem him a faithful, active, and able Minister, who, to my knowledge, has done, in various ways, great and important services to his country, whose interests I wish may always be, by everyone in her employ, as much and as effectually promoted. With my dutiful respects to the Congress, I have the honor to be, Sir,

Your most obedient and most humble servant,

BEN. FRANKLIN.

Hon. Henry Laurens, President of Congress.

*Appendix to Deane's Address, 1784, p. 21.*

ARTHUR LEE TO FRANKLIN AND DEANE.

March 31<sup>st</sup>, 1778.

GENTLEMEN,—The reports I hear of Mr. Deane's intending soon to leave Paris oblige me to repeat the request I long ago and repeatedly made, that we should

settle the public accounts relating to the expenditure of the money entrusted to us for the public. And this is the more absolutely necessary, as what vouchers there are to enable the Commissioners to make out this account are in Mr. Deane's possession. I therefore wish that the earliest day may be appointed for the settlement of these accounts, which appear to me an indispensable part of our duty to the public and to one another.

ARTHUR LEE.

To Messrs. Franklin and Deane.

*Diplomatic Correspondence, Amer. Rev., II. 142.*

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BENJAMIN FRANKLIN TO ARTHUR LEE.

Passy, 1st April, 1778.

SIR,—There is a style in some of your letters—I observe it particularly in the last—whereby superior merit is assumed to yourself in point of care and attention to business, and blame is insinuated on your colleagues without making yourself accountable by a direct charge of negligence or unfaithfulness, which has the appearance of being as artful as it is unkind. In the present case I think the insinuation groundless.

I do not know that either Mr. Deane or myself ever showed any unwillingness to settle the public accounts. The banker's book always contained the whole. You could at any time as easily have obtained the account from them as either of us, and you had abundant more leisure. If, on examining it, you had wanted explanation of any article, you might have called for it and had it. You never did either. As soon as I obtained the account I put it into your hands, and desired you to look into it, and I have heard no more of it since till now, just as Mr. Deane is on the point of departing. Mr. Deane, however, left with me, before the receipt of your letter, both the public papers and explanations of the several articles in the account that came within



his knowledge. With these materials, I suppose we can settle the account whenever you please. You have only to name the day and place, and I will attend to the business with you. I have the honor to be, with great esteem, Sir, &c.,

B. FRANKLIN.

To Arthur Lee, Esq.

*Bigelow's Works of Franklin, VI. 154.*

FROM COUNT D'ESTAING.

Le c<sup>te</sup> d'Estaing a l'honneur d'assurer Monsieur Deane de son respect, il lui fait son compliment sur son arrivée à Aix avec ses quatre compatriotes et il s'en fait un a lui même d'être dans le cas hereaux de leur prouver son dévouement, ils y peuvent compter. l'opinion du c<sup>te</sup> d'Estaing est que ces Messieurs restent a Aix sous les noms qu'ils auront pris, jusqu'au jeudy six ; ils en pourraient partir alors et passer par Marseille ; il serait utile au secret que ces Messieurs s'y montrassent peu, de peur d'être reconnu, car cet ville contient un échantillon de l'univers, ils pouvaient de la se rendre le vendredy au soir au petit port de la Seine situé dans la Rade de Toulon, ils ne seraient plus qu'a une lieue de l'escadre, et le canot du Languedoc irait les prendre a l'instant que le vent permettrat d'aparciller.

M<sup>r</sup> Grand Clos s'enformerait a Marseille des articles dont M<sup>r</sup> Chaumont s'est chargé et dont on n'a point entendu parler à Toulon.

en rade de Toulon ce, 1 avril, 1778.

*Thomas Mss.*

TRANSLATION.

The Count d'Estaing has the honor to assure M<sup>r</sup> Deane of his regard, and, while congratulating him

upon his arrival at Aix with his four countrymen,\* to felicitate himself that he can prove to them his own devotion, upon which they may surely reckon.

The Count d'Estaing is of the opinion that their party should remain at Aix under their assumed names until Thursday the sixth instant; they can then set out by way of Marseilles.

It is best, for purposes of secrecy, that they appear little in public for fear of being recognized, as that city contains people of all nationalities. Thence they may journey, on Friday evening, to the small port of La Seine, on the bay of Toulon, where they will be only a mile from the anchorage of the fleet, and a boat from the Languedoc will come for them the instant that the wind is favorable for hoisting sail. M<sup>r</sup> Grand Clos will inform himself in regard to the things under the care of M<sup>r</sup> Chaumont, of which nothing has been heard at Toulon.

In the Bay of Toulon, April 1<sup>st</sup>, 1778.

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ARTHUR LEE TO BENJAMIN FRANKLIN.

Chaillot, April 2d, 1778.

SIR,—It was with utmost surprise that I learned yesterday that M. Gerard was set out in the evening for America, in a public character, and that M<sup>r</sup> Deane was to accompany him, without either you or he having condescended to answer my letter of the preceeding day.

That a measure of such moment as M. Gerard's mission should have been taken without any Communication with the Commissioners is hardly credible. That, if it was communicated, you should do such violence to the authority which constituted us together with so great an injury and injustice to me as to conceal it from me, and act or advise without me, is equally astonishing. If success to the mission and

\* The American captains engaged by Deane to pilot the fleet off the American coast.



unanimity on the subject were your wish, with what propriety could you make it a party business, and not unite all the Commissioners in the advising and approving a measure in which you desired their friends and constituents might be unanimous? I do not live ten minutes distance from you. Within these few days, as usual, I have seen you frequently; particularly on Monday I was with you at your house for some time. I asked you about the sailing of the ships at Nantes, expressing my desire to know when we should have an opportunity of writing. You said you did not know when they sailed. I asked if there were no letters, none but one from M. Dumas having been shown to me for some time. You answered no. I had at a former meeting asked you whether it was not proper for us to send an express to give intelligence of such consequential events as our being acknowledged here, and the treaty avowed. You told me it would be sufficient to write by the ships at Nantes (for it was afterwards you mentioned that there were two) as the news being public would find its way fast enough.

Upon M<sup>r</sup> Amiel, who came to my house from yours, having mentioned, on Tuesday, that M<sup>r</sup> Deane was to go away in a few days, I wrote to you and him to repeat what I have so often requested, that the public accounts might be settled, for which M<sup>r</sup> Deane had taken possession of all the vouchers, and that the public papers might be delivered to us before his departure. You made me no answer. I sent my secretary again yesterday to desire an answer; you sent me a verbal one, that you would settle the accounts with me any day after to-morrow. Your reason for not doing it before was, that it was not your business. Now it seemed your business only, and M<sup>r</sup> Deane had no concern with it. The delivery of the public papers, which are the property of all, not of any one of the Commissioners, though you and M<sup>r</sup> Deane have constantly taken them to yourselves, was too immaterial for you to answer.

During all this time, and with these circumstances, you have been totally silent to me about the present opportunity of writing to Congress concerning the important public measure in agitation, and about Mr. Deane's departure. Nay, more, what you have said, and the manner in which you have acted, tended to mislead me from imagining that you knew of any such thing. Had you studied to deceive the most distrusted and dangerous enemy of the public, you could not have done it more effectually.

I trust, Sir, you will think with me, that I have a right to know your reasons for treating me thus. If you have anything to accuse me of, avow it, and I will answer you. If you have not, why do you act so inconsistently with your duty to the public, and injuriously to me? Is the present state of Europe of so little moment to our Constituents as not to require our joint consideration and information to them? Is the character of the Court here, and of the person sent to negotiate with our Constituents, of no consequence for them to be apprized of? Is this the example you, in your superior wisdom, think proper to set of order, decorum, confidence and justice?

I trust, Sir, that you will not treat this letter, as you have done many others, with the indignity of not answering it. Though I have been silent, I have not felt the less the many affronts of this kind which you have thought proper to offer me.

I have the honor to be, with great respect,

ARTHUR LEE.

To Dr. Franklin.

*Note by Jared Sparks.* The reason why the sailing of the French fleet and the mission of M. Gerard was not made known to Mr. Lee by Dr. Franklin and Mr. Deane seems to have been that they had not the permission of the French Court to communicate the intelligence to him.



## BENJAMIN FRANKLIN TO ARTHUR LEE.

Passy, 4<sup>th</sup> April, 1778.

SIR,—M<sup>r</sup> Deane communicated to me his intention of setting out for America immediately, as a secret, which he desired I would mention to nobody. I complied with his request. If he did not think fit to communicate it to you also, it is from him you should demand his reasons.

This court has an undoubted right to send as ministers whom it pleases and where it pleases, without advising with us, or desiring our approbation. The measure of sending M. Gérard as a minister to Congress was resolved on without consulting me; but I think it a wise one, and if I did not, I do not conceive that I have any right to find fault with it. France was not consulted when we were sent here. Your angry charge, therefore, of our “making a party business of it” is groundless; we had no hand in the business, and as we neither “acted nor advised” in it, which you suppose, your other high-sounding charge of our doing, thereby, violence to the authority that constituted us, and a great injury and injustice to you, is equally without foundation.

As to the concealing it from you, reasons were given by M<sup>r</sup> Deane that appeared to me satisfactory, and founded entirely on views of public good. I promise to communicate them to you hereafter, if you desire it, that you may have an opportunity of refuting them, if you can. At present it is not proper.

Your third paragraph, therefore, containing a particular account of what passed between you and me at my house on Monday seems not to require any answer. I am still of the same opinion that, after having sent the treaties themselves by different good conveyances, in which treaties our public character was acknowledged in the most authentic manner, and the avowal of the transaction by the French ambassador to the King of England, which was in all the papers of Europe, the

sending of a vessel express to carry the news of paying our respects to court, which was likewise in the papers, was an expensive, and altogether unnecessary, operation.

I received your letter directed to M<sup>r</sup> Deane and myself, relating to the accounts. I had no opportunity of showing it to him until the evening of his departure, and then he was in too much of a hurry to peruse it. I could not, therefore, sooner answer it. But I then wrote an answer, acquainting you that he had put into my hands the public papers, with all the information he could give relating to the accounts.

It was intended to be transcribed fairly and sent to you in the morning. Your Secretary called for an answer before I had time to copy it. I had a good deal of company, and thinking a verbal message might, perhaps, do as well, and save the trouble, I desired him, with my compliments, to acquaint you that I was ready to settle the account with you at any time that you should think fit to appoint, except to-morrow, when I should be otherwise engaged.

As this verbal message offended you, though I cannot conceive why, I now send you the letter. In it I complain of your artful and, I think I may call them, unjust insinuations. You give me fresh instances in the letter I am answering. You magnify your zeal to have the public accounts settled, and insinuate that M<sup>r</sup> Deane and I prevented it, he by "taking possession of all the vouchers," and both of us by taking constantly the public papers to ourselves, which are the property of all the Commissioners.

When this comes to be read in the Committee, for whom it seems to be calculated rather than for me, who know the circumstances, what can they understand by it but that you are the only careful, honest man of the three, and that we have some knavish reasons for keeping the accounts in the dark and you from seeing the vouchers?

But the truth is, the papers naturally came into M<sup>r</sup>



Deane's hands and mine, first, as he was engaged in the purchasing of goods for the Congress before either you or I came into France ; next, as somebody must keep the papers, and you were either on long journeys to Spain, to Vienna and Berlin, or had a commission to go and reside in Spain, which it was expected would soon be executed, whereas M<sup>r</sup> Deane and I lived almost constantly in the same house, either at Paris or Passy ; you separate from us, and we did most of the business.

Where, then, could the papers be so properly placed as with us, who had daily occasion to make use of them ? I never knew that you desired to have the keeping of them. You never were refused a paper or the copy of a paper that you desired.

As to my not acquainting you with the opportunity of writing to Congress by M<sup>r</sup> Deane, we had lately written, and sent by probably safe conveyances, all I knew of importance to write. I therefore did not propose, nor do I write any letter to the Committee by him, especially as in my opinion, considering the route he was to take, he would not arrive so soon as other vessels which may sail long after him. And he could himself give as good an account of our being at court, the only public transaction since our last letters, as we could write.

You ask me why I act so inconsistently with my duty to the public ? This is a heavy charge, Sir, which I have not deserved. But it is to the public that I am accountable and not to you. I have been a servant to many publics, through a long life ; have served them with fidelity, and have been honored by their approbation. There is not a single instance of my ever being accused before of acting contrary to their interest or my duty. I shall account to the Congress when called upon, for this my terrible offence of being silent to you about M<sup>r</sup> Deane's and M<sup>r</sup> Gérard's departure. And I have no doubt of their equity in acquitting me.

It is true that I have omitted answering some of your letters, particularly your angry ones, in which you, with very magisterial airs, schooled and documented me, as if I had been one of your domestics. I saw in the strongest light the importance of our living in decent civility towards each other while our great affairs were depending here. I saw your jealous, suspicious, malignant and quarrelsome temper, which was daily manifesting itself against M<sup>r</sup> Deane and almost every other person you had any concern with. I therefore passed your affronts in silence, did not answer, but burnt your angry letters, and received you when I next saw you with the same civility as if you had never written them. Perhaps I may still pursue the same conduct, and not send you these. I believe I shall not, unless exceedingly pressed by you; for of all things, I hate altercation.

One word more about the accounts. You tell me that my reason for not settling the accounts before was, that it was not my business. Now, it seemed my business only, and M<sup>r</sup> Deane had nothing to do with it. Both these positions are imaginary. I could never have given any such reasons, being always willing to settle accounts with everybody, and not having the least motive to delay or postpone the settlement of these. Nor could it seem that I should say M<sup>r</sup> Deane had nothing to do with it. He had done what he could towards it, and being actually gone, could do no more.

The infinity of business we have had is the true and only reason that I know of why they have not been settled—that is why we did not meet, sit down and compare the vouchers with the articles on the banker's account, in order to see that his charges were supported, and that he had given us due credit for the monies we had put into his hands. This, I apprehend, is all we have to do here. It is to the Congress we are separately to account for the separate drafts we have made on him. This M<sup>r</sup> Deane can do when he arrives, having taken a copy of the account with him.



If you think we should account to one another for our expenses, I have no objection, though I never expected it. I believe they will be found very moderate. I answer mine will, having had only the necessities of life, and purchased nothing besides, except the Encyclopædia, nor sent a sixpence' worth of anything to my friends or family in America. I have the honor to be,

Your obedient servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

To Arthur Lee, Esq.

*Bigelow's Works of Franklin, VI. 155.*

# JOHN ROSS TO ARTHUR LEE.

Nantes, 6<sup>th</sup> April, 1778.

THE HON<sup>BLE</sup> ARTHUR LEE, ESQ<sup>R</sup>,

SIR,—Yours of the 31<sup>st</sup> ult<sup>o</sup> came to my hand Yesterday, in Answer. My letter to you of 28<sup>th</sup> was meant only to bring to your remembrance Your own very words last October, and likewise, if possible, endeavour thereby to have Your Errors corrected in part, as well to remove the prejudices of Malice & misrepresentation (if such prevailed) against the house of Mess<sup>rs</sup> Willing, Morris & C<sup>o</sup>; an act of Justice due to their Characters and Credit as honest Men, from a knowledge of the late transactions in which your good Self and others have been concerned respecting their papers.

I now declare to you, Sir, that such a pointed disavowal of a converseation, introduced by yourself in your own house at Challiothe (the purport of which, an intyre Stranger to the subject could not possibly have entered my head to invent) is a falling off from that Character you ought to Support; and I must, therefore, take the liberty to observe to you that no apologie can possibly be offered for so possitive a denial of your own

Words, but causes by no means honourable to the Author of Malignity.

So far, Sir, from the subject being a "Malicious untruth, trumped up a half Year after, and at this time, to serve similare purposes with those (which you are pleased to say) my other invention's aimed at," I have now before me in my letter book Copy of the letter I wrote at Paris, 28<sup>th</sup> Oct<sup>r</sup> (not many hour's after our conversation), to Robert Morris, Esq<sup>r</sup>, communicating to him your own very account of the application of the public property to the private purposes of the house, from no other Motive, Sir, than my desire to have Such part as had been applyed of this funds refunded, and the injury Sustained by the public remedied speedily.

I gave credit to your information, considered it at that time rather friendly then otherwise to that house, and as such communicated it to M<sup>r</sup> Morris freely. This I did, Sir, when I intertained the most favourable opinion of You, trusting to Your representation as carrying truth & conviction in Your high Station; discovering now, Sir, a disposition on Your part to deny facts, & your determination by such denial to counteract truth, it may not be improper to remark, that previous to your Epistle on this Subject now before me, & the polite manner in which you wish to evade an Acknowledgement of Your own converseation, You should recollect whether you had not told the same story to other's of Veracity. Shou'd it, therefore, prove necessary to bring proofs, possessed as I am of your letter, think, Sir, how mortifyeing a circumstance in that station assigned to you. That meanness of vilefyeing & traducing Characters is not inherent in me, & you'll find I shall ever preserve that openness & Candour (however impolitic) that will always bear examination. In this contest & Correspondence, Sir, You & I are not by any means at present upon a footing. My presumption & freedom, if deemed to be Such, I shall acknowledge, and if defficient in point of respect to your Character in public Life, You shall always find in me, likewise, truth



& Virtue to acknowledge it, without submitting to any insults which may appear to be intentionally leveled at me.

I am, Sir, Your very humble Servant,

J<sup>N</sup>º ROSS.

N. B.—The Commissioners of America are indebted Sundry letters I wrote on business; the cause of neglect they must know best.

*Lee Papers, Harvard University.*

JONATHAN WILLIAMS TO BENJAMIN FRANKLIN.

Nantes, April 18<sup>th</sup>, 1778.

DEAR & HON<sup>D</sup> SIR,—(As I have never had any recall of the powers the Comm<sup>rs</sup> gave me, I was in Duty bound to signify to M<sup>r</sup> Schweighauser that I should oppose those of his powers from M<sup>r</sup> Lee that should interfere with mine. M<sup>r</sup> A. Lee is informed of this, and demands of me Copies of the Powers I hold from the Comm<sup>rs</sup>, which I have accordingly made out; but as I do not choose to give your Signature without your knowledge, I enclose the Copies to you, & beg you will give them to M<sup>r</sup> Lee, if you see no objection.) I have written to M<sup>r</sup> Lee accordingly. I wish the Comm<sup>rs</sup> would either support me or recall their Powers. I have been in hot water a great while, and it is now time to have full authority, or none at all. Give me leave to ask whether M<sup>r</sup> Morris power to me is good or not, and if I give it up to M<sup>r</sup> Lee's Deputy, how am I to be indemnified, should I be afterwards called to an acct. for neglect of Duty?

I hope the Comm<sup>rs</sup> will honour my Bills till all my acct. are settled; they may be sure I shall contract no new ones.

I am ever, with the greatest Respect, Duty, & affection,  
Your most obedient & most hum<sup>l</sup> Servant,

JON<sup>A</sup> WILLIAMS.

M<sup>r</sup> D—— sudden Departure surprizes me, more es-

pecially as he wrote me he was going into the Country for three Weeks only. Where was the use of this? the Secret would have been as sure if he had written nothing.

To Dr. Franklin.

*Lee Papers, Harvard University.*

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ANDREW LIMOZIN TO ARTHUR LEE.

SIR,—The Letter you have honour'd me with the 13<sup>th</sup> of this Month came yesterday to my hands.

Capt<sup>n</sup> Hynson came here at First the 26<sup>th</sup> Febr<sup>y</sup>, 1777, from Dover, on board the Small Cutter call'd at that time the Rochfort, consign'd to me; he had bought her at Dover on the Publick's Acc<sup>t</sup>, & pay'd (it was said) a very extraordinary price for her the day after she came in; werkmen were sent on board of her, according to Hynson's desire. I hinderd Hinson from speaking with anybody else than me from the day of his arrivall untill the 4<sup>th</sup> March night, that a certain Navy's Officer (in whom the Right Hono. Silas Deane, Esq<sup>re</sup> seem'd to have the greatest trust) arriv'd from Paris, & call'd for the said Hynson, altho' that Navy's officer can't speak nor understands a word of English. Hynson informed me the very same night that the Said Officer had brought him orders from the Hon<sup>o</sup> Commission<sup>s</sup> at Paris to sett off directly for that city, & that in consequence thereof he was to part the next day, which he did.

On the 9<sup>th</sup> march an order was brought to me from Hynson to deliver the said Cutter to a certain master called Odievre. I said I could not do it before I had properer orders; the 11<sup>th</sup> of the said month I receiv'd orders from M<sup>r</sup> Carmichael to perform them of Hynson, because the Cutter (said he) was sold. I comply'd with M<sup>r</sup> Carmichael's will, & a fortnight after Odievre delivered the sloop to another master.

Hynson did not come back here before the later end



of July, or the beginning of August. I heard him saying that he had been in Nantz, in St Malo, in London, in Paris, always by the orders of the Hon<sup>ble</sup> Commission. I have often seen & met him in Company with Irish & Scotch men. I was told, but I don't know if it be true, that he us'd to visitt likewise a sort of an English man who hath been here ever since april or May, 1777. God knows what he does ; he dwells with his Wife in a little Country house a quarter of a mile out the Town. I suspect him very much to be pay'd by the Court of St James to look what one is doing here, because I observe that he keeps Company with some Irish & English men who are very much ported for the British cause.

Hynson left Havre in october; he came back at the later end of November, & I was told that he had published to everybody that he was coming from London, where he had been stop'd, because the British Government wanted to punish him, & to confine him under the pretext that he was a Rebel; that he had luckily clear'd himself; it was reported, perhaps judg'd, that Hynson had been in England to buy a Cutter, which came by the way of Dunkirk, towards at the same time, on board of which Folger imbarckd himself, either for Virginia or for Maryland.

The People seeing Hynson going often every day at that Navy's officer, who neither understands nor speaks English, & them both often on board the Ship, the Pacifique, judg'd that Hynson had bought her; as to the trade he hath driven, I don't know anything about it, nor cant get any intelligence on it; when Hynson was here, Folger usd to see the same Company of Irish & Scotch men as Hynson did, but I never heard that he ever frequented the English Gentlemen here before mentiond dwelling out the Town.

When Hynson was not here, Folger had no other Company than American Capt<sup>ns</sup> who were here at the same time. Folger came here from Holland in July, & left this Place towards December; that he imbarckd himself on the said Cutter. When Hynson arrivd

last from England the *Pacifique* was sail'd two days before. Hynson stayd in the town only 12 hours; he imbarkd himself in a fisher boat, to cross the water, & proceeded directly to Nantz by Land.

Considering that Hynson had publishd everywhere that he was an American, it is not surprising if everybody judgd that he had bought the *Pacifique*; moreover, his frequentation with the Navy's officer, who hath no connexions with foreigners; their going both on board the said ship were certainly sufficient instances to make everybody suspect & believe the thing.

The Hon<sup>ble</sup> Robert Morris, Esq<sup>re</sup>, wrote to me the 20<sup>th</sup> May. "M<sup>r</sup> Deane (I believe) is not to blame for not having imployd you as yet in Havre, for it seems that the Choice was not left in your country to him; otherwise, according to the recommendation of the Committee, it would have fallen on you. I have seen Col<sup>l</sup> Conway, now a Brigadier Gen<sup>l</sup> in our Service, who Speaks of you with great respect & esteem. I wish this answer may be sufficient. I am very thankfull, & at the same time very gratefull for your kindness. I beg of you to honour me with the continuation of your Friendship. I shall esteem my Self very happy if I can deserve it."

I was informed by the Publick papers that M<sup>r</sup> Deane was recall'd; that Gentleman, your Brother William, is gone into Germany; that M<sup>r</sup> Adams is at Paris. I am told that he is to remain Plenipotentiary Minister at Berlin. I hope you'll stay at Paris, & I take the freedom to beg of you, if you leave that City, to honour me with your recommendation towards the Gentleman who shall succeed you.

I have the honour to be, with the highest regard,  
Sir, Your most obed<sup>t</sup>, Humble Serv<sup>t</sup>,

AND<sup>w</sup>. LIMOZIN.

Havre de Grace, 18<sup>th</sup> April, 1778.

The Right Hono<sup>ble</sup> Arthur Lee, Esq<sup>re</sup>, Chaillot.

*Lee Papers, Harvard University.*



FROM WILLIAM TEMPLE FRANKLIN.

Passy, April 24<sup>th</sup>, 1778.

DEAR SIR,—I embrace this Opportunity of complying with your request, tho' I have nothing very remarkable to inform you of. I imagine you heard of the arrival of M<sup>r</sup> Adams, with his and your Son, before you left France. Your Son, with that of M<sup>r</sup> Adams's, are put to the same School with Ben and Charles; they already begin to catch some French Words, and I doubt not but that on your Return hither, Jessy will be able to hold a Conversation with you in French.

M<sup>r</sup> Adams has brought a Confirmation of the Appointment of M<sup>r</sup> Carmichael as Secretary to the Commissioners; but, as I imagine, a total Change will soon take place, and that the Commissioners will be separated and become Embassadors or Envoys. It is probable my Grandfather will have such an Appointment; and, consequently, will need a Secretary. If you are of Opinion that the Services I have endeavour'd to render the Publick, since my Residence in France, and those I am capable of, are sufficient Recommendations for that Station, I beg you will mention to Congress that I should deem myself highly honour'd with their Notice. You know the great Desire I have, never to quit my Grandfather; but if, upon Consideration, you do not think me proper for such an Employ, I desire you will let the Matter entirely drop.

Things continue in almost the same Situation as when you left us. Neither France or England have as yet declared War. France, I believe, wishes for it, but England dreads it; tho' her Ministers, or rather her Misleaders, talk of it with great Indifference. They feel more and more the absolute Necessity of a Reconciliation with us, and are almost willing to give up the Word Independence. I say the Word, as they as yet would conciliate, only on Conditions that the

Commerce from the United States should be limited to Great Britain, together with other Stipulations absolutely inconsistent with the true Spirit of Independence. The foolish and perverse Man at the head of them, tho' almost drowning, does not yet open his Eyes; and till he does, nothing but the old short-sighted Measures can be expected.

With the highest Esteem, I am, Dear Sir, Yours very Affectionately,

W<sup>m</sup> T. FRANKLIN.

Hon. S. Deane, Esq<sup>r</sup>

P. S.—Pray present my respectful Compliments to Monsieur Gerard. All your Friends desire to be particularly remember'd to you, and particularly young Chaumont, who is now present. I enclose you the Memorandum you left behind you.

*Thomas Mss.*

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BENJAMIN FRANKLIN TO JOHN ROSS.

Passy, 26<sup>th</sup> April, 1778.

SIR,—The multiplicity of affairs we have lately been engaged in, together with Mr. Deane's departure, who used to correspond with you, occasioned a deficiency in answering your letters. On looking them over I find some reflections on the Commissioners as having acted an ingenious part relative to the papers left by Mr. Thomas Morris. It appears that you have not been well informed; and, therefore, I would now give you the history of the transaction.

On the death of Mr. Morris it was represented to the Commissioners that, on pretense of some kind of partnership between him and Mr. Penet, that gentleman might probably get possession of the papers, which would be attended with great inconvenience in case of any dispute on the settlement of the public accounts; and that, therefore, to prevent this, it was necessary Mr. W. Lee, the surviving colleague, should



go down and take them into his custody ; but to enable him to do that, an order from government here should be obtained, directing the public officers in whose hands they regularly were to deliver them to him ; and the memorial requesting such an order was brought to Mr. Deane and me, ready drawn by Mr. A. Lee, to be signed, which we did without hesitation ; I, for my part, not having the least doubt that, on receiving them, he would deliver to you those belonging to the affairs of Willing & Morris. When he returned, he gave it as the reason of his not doing so, that you had quarrelled with him, used him rudely, denied his authority to meddle with the public papers, and required the whole to be delivered to you ; on which he brought the trunk containing them up to Paris as he received it, sealed by two gentlemen of credit ; and he desired that, to prevent reflections or suspicions, it might be opened, and the papers divided in our presence. We consented to this, and I went to his house for that purpose, where Mr. Izard attended to verify the seals of the two gentlemen, that were on the trunk. But Mr. Deane being hindered from attending by an accident, the business was postponed, and, as I soon after understood by your letters, that Mr. Lee had had the papers under his particular examination several days before that formal sealing, of which I, therefore, did not see the use, and apprehending some danger of being involved in your quarrel, I refused, on consideration, to have anything to do with the opening and sorting of the papers. Mr. Lee was about to set out for Germany, and intimated that our not doing this must stop his journey. To remove this obstacle, as Mr. Deane was going to America, and Mr. A. Lee might soon go to Spain, I let him know that if he chose to leave the trunk sealed in my care, to be delivered in the same state to him or his order, I would consent to take it. He accordingly brought it to my house, with a receipt to that purpose, ready written, for me to sign. I signed it accordingly, and thought

that might have been sufficient; but, so cautious is he, that, lest I should deny my handwriting (I suppose this reason because I cannot conceive another), he desired four persons to put their hands to the receipt as witnesses. He has, indeed, excused this since, by saying that he meant only to have it appear that those gentlemen, being present, approved of his delivery of the trunk to me. This might do for two of them, Mr. Deane and his brother, who, being Commissioners that with me procured for him the power of taking possession of them, had, therefore, some right to give their approbation; but the two others, Mr. Izard and Mr. Pringle, had no concern in the affair. Thus you see how the trunk comes to be in my hands, and yet not in my disposition. It is said to contain Mr. Morris' papers. I know nothing of the contents, and can know nothing of them, being obliged to deliver the trunk sealed as I received it, and I refused to take the key; and, apprehending Mr. Lee to be a very artful as well as disputatious man, I now wish I had not even consented to receive it. You see here the innocent part Mr. Deane and I have had in this affair, yet Mr. Lee has reflected upon us in one of his letters to me as countenancing you in treating him ill at Nantes; and you affront us as having given him our sanction for inspecting and carrying off the papers belonging to the house of Willing & Morris, but nothing is more common than to pass censures without knowing facts.

Mr. William Lee, in some conversation, expressed his opinion that a power to receive the papers ought to come from Mr. Morris' legal representative, otherwise he could not deliver them. I mention this for your information, as I suppose he will deliver them to no other person; for he is much of a lawyer, and would do everything regularly. I am, sir, your most humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

Endorsed: "Letter to Mr. Jn. Ross, April 26, '78; not sent, May 19, '78."

*Bigelow's Works of Franklin, VI. 173.*



## FROM SIMEON DEANE.

Letter intercepted by the English, and published in  
Lloyd's Morning Post, August 26, 1778.

DEAR BROTHER,—I wrote you immediately after my arrival in the frigate *Le Sensible*; also three letters from Yorktown; to those I must beg leave in part to refer you for the different articles of intelligence at that time stirring; also the various manœuvres, and appearances of parties and factions so notoriously prevailing in this distracted country. I am sorry to think that such epithets may ever be truly applied to any respectable public body; but the world must and will soon judge, whether certain flagrant transactions proceed from these motives or not.

It is now about a fortnight since I left Yorktown, and having been travelling in different parts of the country, have missed two posts from thence, otherwise should have had letter from our B. D., also from Mr. Holker, who, I conclude, is ere now at Yorktown. Tomorrow I go from hence again to Petersburg and Richmond, at which two places I expect to make my stand. I am sorry not to find any of that number of vessels consigned me from Europe; and as these Capes have been so closely blocked up, I expect they have fallen into the hands of the English, except some few who have got into North Carolina, and have then thought proper to do their own business, which is a practice they pretend to adopt, however disadvantageous to their owners. But they very often bring some little piddling fellow, who will do it to save himself the commissions, &c.

I have not as yet had any intelligence concerning the Union, Capt. Welsh, from Cette, nor the Two Friends, from Nantes; but as the communication is at present so interrupted both by land and water, I still hope they are somewhere arrived, either northward or southward. If they were here with such valuable cargoes as theirs, I could sell for £100,000, and procure

tobacco at £4 per cent. in immediate payment. Goods are very high here and scarce ; but should these Capes continue open for a few weeks, as they have been for two or three weeks past, tobacco would rise, and goods fall very fast. Salt was yesterday sold by the cargo for 100 pounds tobacco for two bushels ; but it will certainly fall ; indeed it has already greatly fell.

My flattering expectations in this country are greatly checked by the missing so many consignments ; also by the brigs Two Friends and Union, still unheard of. However, I shall still continue hereabouts, and try to get what business I can ; at the same time hope you will not fail to write to our acquaintance in Europe, and influence their consignments in my behalf, without which I fear I may not be able to make an advantageous settlement here.

Numerous shoals of French adventurers are crowding over in every ship, and will most certainly attempt to secure the consignments of their countrymen by every artifice in their power.

I have wrote to Sir George Grand, Mr. Emery & Son, and Messrs. Morrel, by this conveyance, and would write to all my other acquaintance in France, if I could write in French. I beg you to inform them particularly of my situation, and influence their consignments ; especially my partners, Sabbatier and Despres, M. Chaumont, and M. Grand ; also all our other acquaintance. Pray make my apology to those gentlemen last mentioned ; assure them that I would write to them if I could write French ; and whenever I can get a French clerk, will regularly write to them.

I am much at a loss to calculate how or in what manner you will proceed, in consequence of the unworthy treatment you have received ; but hope that if you can consistently stay in France, and turn your views to commercial matters, they may turn to great advantage. Indeed, one fortunate adventure at this critical time makes a large fortune. M. Beaumarchais's large ship, Le Fier Roderique, from Rochfort, is in York



River. She mounts fifty-four guns, and has nearly discharged her cargo, having sold to the State of Virginia at about six for one, or a dollar for a livre, prime cost. She was said to have been consigned to François, but before she came here they made sale of the goods, &c. Yesterday a ship also arrived mounting forty guns; she sold her cargo in New London, and is come to load with tobacco. I have not yet heard her name, or from whence, but expect to be informed this evening.

I have had the honor to wait on his Excellency, Governor Henry, and also on Colonel Harrison. These gentlemen have been exceedingly polite and civil, and I doubt not are your and my real friends. The gentleman first named is very frank, and speaks concerning the plots of your N. E. friends, together with M—— from this State, in a manner unreserved. Your letter to him he enclosed, and sent to Mr. R. Morris, who, he thinks, will get something done in the matter. Mr. Morris, I suppose, has convinced you of the mistake he made concerning his brother, and of his esteem and friendship for you. They are attacking him in a certain great and mighty assembly, and 'tis said that some of the Southern —— are joining those from N. E. against him; especially the present President of Congress.

I am told that when Mr. Hancock, of Boston, the late president, resigned his office, his countrymen of N. E. vigorously opposed returning him the thanks of Congress. The two Adams's from N. E. are both strongly against him and yourself. God knows what lengths they intend by their factions; yet depend they are indefatigable. I can with great truth assure you, that, notwithstanding their treatment of you, and charging every foreigner to your account, they have not yet dared to attack your character, further than to say you were in trade, &c. This has been amply blazed by the imprudence of Mr. Bromfield, who has told it everywhere, in Virginia and the Carolinas, that

you and M. M—— owned a quarter or half of the ship commanded by Capt. Roche. The effects of that cargo, I believe, are here (or a part of them), in his possession at James River, and in case they have been laid out into tobacco, last June, at 30 to 36, may turn amazingly advantageous—but whether this has been fully done or not, I am not informed.

His Excellency informs me that a Land Office will likely soon be opened here on very advantageous terms for the sale of \* \* \* \* \*

Hon. Silas Deane, Esq.

*Case of Silas Deane, Seventy-Six Society, p. 124.*

#### TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Delaware Bay, 10<sup>th</sup> July, 1778.

SIR,—I have now the pleasure of acquainting your Excellency of my arrival here yesterday, on board the Languedoc, commanded by his Excellency, Count d'Estaing, with a fleet of twelve sail of the line, and four frigates. We sailed from Toulon the 10<sup>th</sup> of April last. I presume, therefore, that I have no intelligence from Europe so late as what you must be possessed of already.

Finding that the enemy had escaped, the Admiral resolved instantly to pursue them to New York, and will sail this morning for that port, but he has no pilot. If, therefore, pilots can be sent to meet him on his arrival, it will be of the utmost service to the expedition. I shall embark this afternoon in company with his Excellency, Mons. Gerard, for Philadelphia, and hope soon to have the honor of paying my respects to your Excellency, and the honorable Congress in person, and to congratulate you on the late glorious events. I have sent Commodore Nicholson express, who can inform you of our situation.

Permit me to recommend him as an active, spirited



officer, to whom the Admiral has been much obliged by his services during our passage.

I have the honor to be, with the most profound respect, your Excellency's most obedient, and very humble servant.

SILAS DEANE.

P. S. His Excellency, the Admiral, desires, that, on the arrival of the pilots at the Hook, where they will find his fleet, they would make a signal with a white flag, either on board their boat, if they have one, or from the shore, formed in a triangle. Mons. Chouan, who will wait on you with a letter from the Admiral, sets out suddenly, and may want money to bear his expenses on his further journey. Mons. Gerard desires that he may be supplied on his account, with any sum to the amount of twenty thousand livres.

To the President of Congress.

*Diplomatic Correspondence, Amer. Rev. I. 120.*

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TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Delaware Bay, July 10th, 1778.

SIR,—This will be delivered to your Excellency by Monsieur Chouan, who comes with letters from his Excellency, the Comte d'Estaing. Permit me to recommend him to your favors, and desire that you will furnish him with money to the amount of twenty thousand livres, if he have occasion for it, and the same will be accounted for by his Excellency, M. Gerard, as I have already mentioned in my letter, per Capt. Nicholson. I have the honor to be, with the utmost respect, your Excellency's most obedt. & very humble servant,

SILAS DEANE.

To His Excellency President Laurens.

*Case of Silas Deane, Seventy-Six Society, p. 133.*

## PROCEEDINGS OF CONGRESS

Philadelphia, Saturday, July 11, 1778.

A letter of the 10th from Silas Deane, Esquire, dated "Delaware Bay," was read, informing Congress of his arrival on board the *Languedoc*, commanded by his Excellency, Count d'Estaing, who has under his command a fleet of twelve sail of line of battle ships and four frigates, which sailed from Toulon the 10th of April.

Ordered, That it be referred to a committee of three, and that they shall be directed to take the speediest measures for furnishing Count D'Estaing with a sufficient number of faithful pilots.

The members chosen, Mr. Duer, Mr. J. B. Smith and Mr. Boudinot.

*Journal of Congress.*

## TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Chester, July 11<sup>th</sup>, 2 o'clock A. M., 1778.

SIR,—I did myself the honor of writing to your Excellency per Capt. Nicholson and Mons<sup>r</sup> Chouan, who went express the day after our arrival at the Capes, which letters, I conclude, have been received, and to which, therefore, I beg leave to refer you. We arrived but this moment, and, provided Pilots can be had, shall be at Town this evening.

As some ceremony is always practised on the arrival of a Foreign Minister, or a ship of War in the commission of allies, permit me to advertise you of what is expected on the occasion. Mons<sup>r</sup> St. Cesar has orders to salute first, expecting an equal number of guns in return. He will fire nineteen. On the Ambassador's leaving the ship, he will be saluted with fifteen; and the number to be returned, is to be regulated as the honorable Congress, or your Excellency, shall judge proper. The Frigate, when in sight of the town, must be informed if her salute will be returned as proposed, either by having a signal



given, by hoisting the continental colours in sight, or by sending a boat on board—the latter will be the most certain. I should not have delayed one moment to wait on you in person, but have been ill of an intermitting fever, ever since we made the land, from which, I hope, I am now recovering.

I have the honor to be, with the most profound respect, your Excellency's most obedient and very humble servant,

SILAS DEANE.

Hon. Henry Laurens, President of Congress, per  
Capt. Johnson.

P. S. Capt. Johnson, well known to many in the Congress, and, I suppose, universally for his bravery in the service of his country, will have the honor of delivering you this, to whom refer for particulars. 42 Oxen, 700 Sheep, 1,800 Poultry, 6 Veals, 12 Hogs, 200 Pigeons, 20 Geese, 700 doz. Eggs, 10,000 W<sup>t</sup> Hay, Indian Corn, 500 H<sup>ds</sup> Water.

*Sparks' Mss., Harvard University.*

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#### ARRIVAL OF SILAS DEANE.

*Philadelphia, July 14.*—Early last Sunday afternoon his Excellency Monsier Gerard, Ambassador from his most Christian Majesty to the United States, arrived in this city. He was accompanied from Chester to an elegant apartment provided for him in Market-street by a committee of Congress appointed for that purpose. On his Entrance into the city he was saluted by Colonel Proctor's artillery. It is impossible to describe the joy that appeared in every good man's countenance upon this auspicious event. The frigate which brought his Excellency to Chester is one of a French fleet of twelve ships of the line and several frigates, from Toulon, under command of the Count d'Estaing, which arrived last week off Chingoteague, in Virginia,

and being furnished with pilots at that place, were, we hear, to proceed to Sandy-Hook, from whence we hourly expect to hear the most important intelligence.

The Hon. Mr. Deane, our late worthy Plenipotentiary at the court of France, arrived in the same frigate with his Excellency the French Ambassador, and accompanied him to the city. The frigate has passed our line of chivaux de frize, and is hourly expected up before the town.

Who would have thought (says a correspondent) that the American colonies, imperfectly known in Europe a few years ago, and claimed by every pettyfogging lawyer in the House of Commons, and every cobbler in the beer houses of London, as a part of their property, should in the course of three years of a war with Great Britain, receive an Ambassador from the most powerful monarchy in Europe.

*The Pennsylvania Packet, July 14, 1778.*

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#### PROCEEDINGS OF CONGRESS.

*Philadelphia, Wednesday, July 15, 1778.*—A letter of March 25th from his Excellency the Count de Vergennes to Silas Deane, Esquire, was read.

A letter of March 23d, from the Honourable William Lee, at Paris, was read, and referred to the Committee for Foreign Affairs.

*Journals of Congress.*

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#### FROM JONATHAN WILLIAMS.

Passy, July 22d, 1778.

DEAR SIR,—I wrote you a few days since by a little Vessel from Dunkirk, which I hope will get safe to hand.

There is a wide difference between the State of our affairs here at this time & during your residence; no farther secrecy is necessary in any operation, and Gov-



ernment readily assists, instead of oposing American transactions; now there is no longer any vexation, trouble, or danger. The transaction of the public affairs is committed to those who did not dare to appear when they were difficult to manage, & every person who had anything to do with you is shamefully turned aside, because (pardon me the repetition) because it was you they had to do with; when I give you this reason, you can't be at a loss of the cause. This, however, is not the reason given; it is because the simplicity of public business is necessary for the frugality of the Public Money; and that simplicity requires that it should be only in the hands of M<sup>r</sup> Lee's deputy's and Sub Deputies. My discharge, therefore, "tis said does" not proceed from any prejudice to me, "for whom they have a great respect and Esteem" (these are the words); and two of the Commissioners say that I am honest; that I have good Commercial abilities; that I am industrious; that the money I have laid out is been very beneficial laid out; that I have done great service to my Country. That I have been very (nay, too) reasonable in charging 2 pr Cent Commission, when all the other Agents charge 5; but it is the opinion of one that Frugality requires a change; this establishes the new Doctrine of 5 being less than 2. M<sup>r</sup> Grand and I exchanged Papers the other day of a very singular Kind. I presented him with the approbation of 2 of the Commissioners for all my Drafts; he shewed me the Disapprobation of one of them with a prohibition to carry said Bills to the Public Debt; of all the disagreeable Dispositions that the World produces, I believe this one stands alone; and without prejudice or passion I am sure (and it is an Universal opinion here) that he can never have anything to do in any Business without defeating its purpose, and quarrelling with all who has any concern with him. I have been here near two Months to settle my Accounts, and I have been obliged to collect Vouchers in the same manner as if I was to appear at

a Bar of Justice, and was accused of Fraud, yet I can't get them examined.

I have given up all the Goods that were in my possession, and the Magazine is stopped.

I shall make no comment on the above so far as it relates to me, nor shall I make use of any argument to persuade you to assist me with your interest in Congress. If you think me still deserving, I shall be sure of your Friendship, and I have no right to expect it from any other motive.

War is begun, several Captures of Armed Vessels have been made on both sides, and two powerful Fleets are now at sea—Kepple, with about 28 Sail of the Line, and D'Orvilliers, with about 32. Every hour is big with expectation of a Battle. The King is publicly declared in a Letter to the Admiral that he is determined to take vengeance, and has directed his Ships to seize and Destroy all English property wherever it is to be found. The Spanish Galleons are arrived. I am obliged to break off, but will take up my Pen again as soon as possible. I am most respectfully & affectionately Yours,

J. WILLIAMS.

Original per Capt. Whipple.

To Hon. Silas Deane, Esq<sup>r</sup>

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Philadelphia, 28th July, 1778.

SIR,—I had the honor of receiving on the 4th of March last, in a letter from Mr. Lovell (a copy of which I now enclose), the orders of Congress, announcing my recall, and directing my immediate return.

This was the first and only intimation I ever received of the resolutions of Congress on the subject. I immediately complied with it, and left Paris the 1st



of April, with hopes of arriving in season to give Congress that intelligence which, in the order for my return, they express their want of.

Unfortunately my passage has been much longer than I expected, and I but now begin to find myself recovering from the fatigues of it; yet my desire of giving Congress, as early as possible, an account of the state of their affairs in Europe when I left France, as well as the peculiar situation in which my recall has placed me personally, has induced me to address them through your Excellency, to solicit for as early an audience as the important business in which they are engaged will admit of. I have the honor to be, With the most sincere respect, &c.,

SILAS DEANE.

To his Excellency Henry Laurens.

*Diplomatic Correspondence, Amer. Rev. I. 122.*

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TO REV. EZRA STILES, D.D.

Philadelphia, July 29<sup>th</sup>, 1778.

SIR,—It is with the greatest pleasure I am informed that you are appointed to the honorable and important station of presiding over the Colleges in New Haven, & I embrace this Opportunity most sincerely to congratulate you, and the youth of that Seminary as well as the public in general, on your Appointment. The little attention giv'n to the modern Languages in most of the Universities & Academies, as well in Europe as in America, has long since been universally complained of, and unhappily the defect has been almost as universally unremedied; as I have experienced the many difficulties & embarrassments which a man doing Business abroad labors under who is ignorant of any modern Language except his own, I can but be solicitous to have the study of them, at least of the French, introduced into our Academies & Colleges.

This Language is not only spoke in all the Courts, but daily becomes more & more universal among People of Business, as well as men of Letters, in all the principal Towns & Cities in Europe. The particular advantages of it to ev'ry one transacting Business abroad, whether commercial or political, are too obvious to need the being pointed out, and I am confident you will consider the subject in the same point of importance which I do, & consequently that you will be willing to introduce & encourage the study of this language in the Colleges under your care; at the same Time I am very sensible that the moderate state of the Funds at your disposal checks almost every Attempt of this Nature which is attended with an Expence. I therefore take liberty to propose (should it be agreeable to you and the reverend Corporation to patronize the design) solliciting Assistance from some of my Noble & opulent Friends in France, to establish a professor of the French Language in your Colleges, & to make a Collection of the writings of their most celebrated Authors for your Library. I have repeatedly mentioned the proposal in general to many of them at Paris, and have no doubt it may be carried into Execution. If it meet with your Approbation, you will inform me by a Letter, and what annual Sum in Sterling will be sufficient for the support of such a Professor or Instructor in a reputable manner. The French Language is spoke in great purity in most of the Swiss Cantons, particularly so at Geneva, whence a Professor might be obtained, whose principles as well as manners could not fail of being agreeable. I expect in a few Months to reimbarc for France, where I shall necessarily be detained for some Time on Business, and my Interest in promoting the Institution is entirely at your Service; I shall, with the greatest pleasure, contribute in proportion to the Little I am possess'd of towards it, & I wish on this Account in particular it was more considerable. I have the honor to be, with the most sincere respect



& esteem, Sir, Your most Obed<sup>t</sup> & very Humble  
Serv<sup>t</sup>,

SILAS DEANE.

To the Rev. Dr. Stiles.

*Stiles' Mss., Yale College Library.*

PROCEEDINGS OF CONGRESS.

*Philadelphia, Saturday, August 15th, 1778. Ordered,*  
That Mr. Deane be introduced, and that a seat be prepared for him at the end of the lower table, on the President's right hand.

Mr. Deane was accordingly introduced, and delivered two letters, one from Dr. Franklin, dated Passy, March 31st, 1778, and one from Monsieur de Beaumarchais, dated Paris, March 24th, 1778, which were read.

Mr. Deane was then proceeding to give the information required; whereupon a motion was made that the information be given in writing.

*Ordered,* That Mr. Deane withdraw.

Accordingly he withdrew; and on motion made, That the narrative Mr. Deane shall give to this house, of his transactions in France, be in writing.

After debate the previous question was moved, and the yeas and nays being required by Mr. S. Adams.

|                         |                    |       |      |
|-------------------------|--------------------|-------|------|
| New Hampshire.....      | Mr. Bartlett ..... | ay—ay |      |
| Massachusetts-Bay ..... | Mr. S. Adams ..... | no    | } no |
|                         | Mr. Gerry.....     | no    |      |
|                         | Mr. Lovell.....    | ay    |      |
|                         | Mr. Holten.....    | no    |      |
| Rhode Island .....      | Mr. Marchant ..... | no—no |      |
| Connecticut.....        | Mr. Sherman.....   | ay    | } ay |
|                         | Mr. Hosmer .....   | ay    |      |
|                         | Mr. A. Adams ..... | no    |      |
| New York .....          | Mr. Lewis.....     | no    | } no |
|                         | Mr. Duer.....      | no    |      |
|                         | Mr. G. Morris..... | ay    |      |

|                               |                       |    |      |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------|----|------|
| New <sup>1</sup> Jersey ..... | Mr. Witherspoon ..    | ay | } ay |
|                               | Mr. Scudder .....     | ay |      |
| Pennsylvania .....            | Mr. R. Morris .....   | no | } no |
|                               | Mr. Reed .....        | ay |      |
|                               | Mr. James Smith ..... | no |      |
| Delaware .....                | Mr. M'Kean .....      | ay | ay   |
| Maryland .....                | Mr. Chase .....       | ay | } no |
|                               | Mr. Plater .....      | no |      |
|                               | Mr. Forbes .....      | no |      |
| Virginia .....                | Mr. Banister .....    | no | } no |
|                               | Mr. T. Adams .....    | no |      |
|                               | Mr. Harvie .....      | no |      |
| North Carolina .....          | Mr. Penn .....        | no | } ay |
|                               | Mr. Harnett .....     | ay |      |
|                               | Mr. Williams .....    | ay |      |
| South Carolina .....          | Mr. Laurens .....     | no | } no |
|                               | Mr. Drayton .....     | no |      |
|                               | Mr. Heyward .....     | ay |      |
| Georgia .....                 | Mr. Telfair .....     | no | } no |
|                               | Mr. Langworthy .....  | no |      |

So it passed in the negative.

The main question was then put, the yeas and nays being required by Mr. Chase.

|                         |                       |       |      |
|-------------------------|-----------------------|-------|------|
| New Hampshire .....     | Mr. Bartlett .....    | no—no |      |
| Massachusetts-Bay ..... | Mr. S. Adams .....    | ay    | } ay |
|                         | Mr. Gerry .....       | ay    |      |
|                         | Mr. Holten .....      | ay    |      |
|                         | Mr. Lovell .....      | ay    |      |
| Rhode Island .....      | Mr. Marchant .....    | ay—ay |      |
| Connecticut .....       | Mr. Sherman .....     | ay    | } ay |
|                         | Mr. Hosmer .....      | ay    |      |
|                         | Mr. A. Adams .....    | ay    |      |
| New York .....          | Mr. Lewis .....       | ay    | } no |
|                         | Mr. Duer .....        | no    |      |
|                         | Mr. G. Morris .....   | no    |      |
| New Jersey .....        | Mr. Witherspoon ..... | ay    | } ay |
|                         | Mr. Scudder .....     | ay    |      |



|                          |                           |       |   |    |
|--------------------------|---------------------------|-------|---|----|
| Pennsylvania . . . . .   | Mr. R. Morris . . . . .   | no    | } | no |
|                          | Mr. Reed . . . . .        | no    |   |    |
|                          | Mr. James Smith . . . . . | no    |   |    |
| Delaware . . . . .       | Mr. M'Kean . . . . .      | no—no | } | no |
| Maryland . . . . .       | Mr. Chase . . . . .       | no    |   |    |
|                          | Mr. Plater . . . . .      | no    |   |    |
|                          | Mr. Forbes . . . . .      | no    | } | no |
| Virginia . . . . .       | Mr. Banister . . . . .    | no    |   |    |
|                          | Mr. T. Adams . . . . .    | no    |   |    |
|                          | Mr. Harvie . . . . .      | no    | } | no |
| North Carolina . . . . . | Mr. Penn . . . . .        | no    |   |    |
|                          | Mr. Harnett . . . . .     | no    |   |    |
|                          | Mr. Williams . . . . .    | no    | } | no |
| South Carolina . . . . . | Mr. Laurens . . . . .     | ay    |   |    |
|                          | Mr. Drayton . . . . .     | no    |   |    |
|                          | Mr. Heyward . . . . .     | no    | } | no |
| Georgia . . . . .        | Mr. Telfair . . . . .     | no    |   |    |
|                          | Mr. Langworthy . . . . .  | no    | } | no |
|                          |                           |       |   |    |

So it passed in the negative.

*Resolved*, That Mr. Deane be called in and informed that Congress desire his attendance again on Monday morning at ten o'clock, to give, from his memory, a general account of his whole transactions in France, from the time of his first arrival, as well as a particular state of the funds of Congress, and the commercial transactions in Europe, especially with Mr. Beaumarchais, and to answer such questions as may be asked.

Mr. Deane being called in and informed of the desire of Congress, withdrew.

*Philadelphia, Monday, August 17, 1778.* Mr. Deane attending, according to order, was introduced, and proceeded to give the information required; and having made some progress therein, he had leave to withdraw, and accordingly withdrew.

*Ordered*, That Mr. Deane attend on Wednesday morning at ten o'clock, to proceed in his information.

*Philadelphia, Wednesday, August 19, 1778.* *Ordered*,

That Mr. Deane be informed that Congress do not expect his attendance this day, but that he attend on Friday next at ten o'clock, to proceed in his information.

*Philadelphia, Friday, August 21, 1778.* According to order, Mr. S. Deane attended, and proceeded in his information, and having finished the general account of his transactions, from the time of his first arrival in France to his departure from that Kingdom, and of his commercial transactions in Europe, especially with Mr. de Beaumarchais, he had leave to withdraw and withdrew accordingly.

*Journals of Congress.*

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Philadelphia, Sept. 8th, 1778.

SIR,—I pray your Excellency to remind the Congress that I still wait to receive their orders, and though I am sensible that they have many and important affairs under their consideration, yet I must entreat them to reflect on the peculiar situation I have for some time past been placed in, and inform me if they desire my further attendance.

I have the honor to be, with the highest respect,

Your Excellency's most Obedt. & very Hum<sup>ble</sup> Servt,

SILAS DEANE.

His Excellency President Laurens.

*Case of Silas Deane, Seventy-Six Society, p. 134.*

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Philadelphia, 11th Sept., 1778.

SIR,—I received your note, in which you politely informed me that you had laid before Congress the letter, which I did myself the honor of writing to your Excellency a few days since. I now return you my thanks for the attention you have paid me, and



again take the liberty to ask of you to remind Congress that the circumstances under which I left France, and the situation of the affairs in Europe, which I had been principally concerned in transacting (as I had the honor of mentioning to Congress), render it indispensably necessary on my part that I return as early as possible, and that if my further attendance here is not necessary, I pray to be informed of it, that I may be at liberty to visit my friends, and prepare for my voyage; or that if further intelligence is expected from me, I may have an early opportunity of giving it.

I flatter myself your Excellency and the Congress will not judge my repeated applications improper, when the circumstances which attended my leaving Europe, and the situation I have been in since my arrival in America, are recollected and considered.

I have the honor to be, &c.,

SILAS DEANE.

To his Excellency Henry Laurens.

*Diplomatic Correspondence, Amer. Rev., I. 123.*

TO JOHN HANCOCK.

Philadelphia, Septem<sup>r</sup> 14<sup>th</sup>, 1778.

DEAR SIR,—I have not had the Pleasure of a Line from you since you left us, which I impute to your having been so much engaged in public Business. I hope the articles sent you arrived safe and were found to satisfaction, and that we shall soon have the Pleasure of seeing you again in Philadelphia by one means or another. The Affairs which respect me have dragg'd on so heavily that Nothing decisive has been done, though I have been constantly applying, and my Patience is really worn out, & I cannot & will not longer endure a Treatment which carries with it marks of the deepest ingratitude; but if the Congress have not time to hear a man who they have sent for

Four Thousand miles, solely under the pretence of receiving Intelligence from him, it is Time that the good people of this Continent should know the manner in which their Representatives conduct the public Business, and how they Treat their Fellow Citizens who have rendered their Country the most important services.

I freely appeal to every man of honor & feelings, and will be content to be judg'd from what passes in his own breast, on supposing himself but for one moment exactly in my Situation. A Majority of Congress are disposed to do me justice, & complain of my being delayed in the manner I am from day to day, & from week to week ; but you know that in Congress a few men can put off the decision of any Question by one means or other as long as they please, and you are not a Stranger to what a certain Triumvirate, who have been from the first members of Congress, are equall. The baseness and ingratitude of one of them you have sufficiently experienced in private Life, to know him capable of any thing in public ; and my old Colleague Roger, the Jesuit, with their Southern associate, have been indefatigable ever since my Arrival. Roger, indeed, is at present on a Tour to the Army, and thence to New Haven, to stir up the pure minds of the Faithful there against the next Election of Delegates ; he is expected back in a few Days, when perhaps they will be ready to take the Field, after having suggested in Whispers ev'ry thing that could tend to hurt the man they causelessly attack. I am noway discouraged, but I am grieved to find our Councils & our public deliberations conducted in the manner they are at present. The very name of Congress was a great while sacred, almost as that of the Divinity, in these States ; you as well as I know how much weakness, to say nothing more, lay concealed from the first, behind the sacred Vail, from the view of the public. I tremble for the Consequences when Americans who have served their Country with the highest repu-



tation at home and abroad shall be forced by the Injuries and abuse which they receive, in vindication of themselves, to draw this Vail, and hold up to the open View of their Countrymen certain individuals who have by one circumstance or another greatly influenced the deliberations of Congress. Self Defence is the first Law of Nature. I hope and am sure I shall not be driven to this extremity whilst so many appear resolv'd to see justice done me. I will not add but that I most impatiently expect you here, and hope that you will bring Mrs. Hancock with you, to whom I pray you present my most respectful Compliments. I am ever, with the most sincere attachment,

D<sup>r</sup> Sir, your most Obed<sup>t</sup> and Very hum<sup>bl</sup> Serv<sup>t</sup>,  
SILAS DEANE.

Hon<sup>bl</sup> J. Hancock.

*Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography, XI., 205.*

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#### PROCEEDINGS OF CONGRESS.

*Philadelphia, Monday, September 14, 1778.* A letter of the 11th from Mr. S. Deane was read.

Congress took into consideration the letter from Mr. S. Deane, and after some time spent thereon,

*Ordered,* That the further consideration thereof be postponed.

*Philadelphia, Wednesday, September 16, 1778.* Congress resumed the consideration of the letter of the 11th from Mr. Deane; whereupon a motion was made,

That Mr. Deane be directed to attend Congress on Friday morning next, to answer such questions as the members may propose to him, for the better understanding of the state and progress of public affairs during his mission in France.

An amendment was moved to strike out "members," and insert the word "house."

On which the yeas and nays being required by Mr. Chase :

|                        |                                                                     |           |
|------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|
| New Hampshire . . . .  | Mr. Bartlett . . . . .                                              | ay—ay     |
| Massachusetts Bay . .  | Mr. S. Adams . . . . .                                              | no        |
|                        | Mr. Gerry, excused, not<br>being present at the<br>debate . . . . . | } no      |
|                        | Mr. Lovell . . . . .                                                |           |
|                        | Mr. Holten . . . . .                                                |           |
| Rhode Island . . . . . | Mr. Marchant . . . . .                                              | no—no     |
| New York . . . . .     | Mr. Lewis . . . . .                                                 | ay        |
|                        | Mr. Duer . . . . .                                                  | } ay      |
|                        | Mr. G. Morris . . . . .                                             |           |
| New Jersey . . . . .   | Mr. Witherspoon . . . .                                             | no        |
|                        | Mr. Elmer . . . . .                                                 | } divided |
| Pennsylvania . . . . . | Mr. Roberdeau . . . . .                                             |           |
|                        | Mr. Clingan . . . . .                                               | no        |
| Delaware . . . . .     | Mr. Vandyke . . . . .                                               | ay—ay     |
| Maryland . . . . .     | Mr. Chase . . . . .                                                 | ay        |
|                        | Mr. Plater . . . . .                                                | ay        |
|                        | Mr. Forbes . . . . .                                                | } ay      |
|                        | Mr. Henry . . . . .                                                 |           |
| Virginia . . . . .     | Mr. Harvie . . . . .                                                | ay        |
|                        | Mr. R. H. Lee . . . . .                                             | } ay      |
|                        | Mr. Griffin . . . . .                                               |           |
| North Carolina . . . . | Mr. Penn . . . . .                                                  | ay        |
|                        | Mr. Harnett . . . . .                                               | } ay      |
|                        | Mr. Williams . . . . .                                              |           |
| South Carolina . . . . | Mr. Laurens . . . . .                                               | ay        |
|                        | Mr. Drayton . . . . .                                               | } ay      |
|                        | Mr. Mathews . . . . .                                               |           |
| Georgia . . . . .      | Mr. Walton . . . . .                                                | ay        |
|                        | Mr. Telfair . . . . .                                               | } ay      |

So it was resolved in the affirmative.

Question put on the motion as amended.

Resolved in the affirmative.

*Philadelphia, Friday, September 18, 1778.* — The



Committee to whom was referred the letters from the Honourable Arthur Lee, Esquire, of the 6th, 15th, and 31st of January, 1778, and the letter of January 16th, 1778, from the Honourable Benjamin Franklin and Silas Deane, brought in a report which was read; whereupon

A member in his place informed the house that he had information that Mr. Carmichael had charged Mr. Deane with misapplication of the public money, &c.

Being called upon to reduce this information to writing, he delivered in a writing, which was read.

*Ordered*, That the report of the Committee lie on the table.

*Philadelphia, Saturday, September 19, 1778.*—The President laid before Congress the letters which he had received some time ago, and of which he informed Congress upon the receipt thereof, and afterwards, when he desired to know the sense of the house concerning them, as some of them were not directed to him as President, but as delegate from South Carolina, and all contained matters of private as well as public nature, and of which Congress declined to receive extracts. *Ordered*, That they be read.

The same were read, and are as follows: a letter of Nov. 24th, 1777, from A. Izard; one of Feb. 16th, 1778, from the Honourable R. Izard, Esquire, inclosing a copy of his letter of January 28th to Doctor Franklin; Doctor Franklin's answer of the 29th, and his reply of the 30th of the same month. A letter of March 1st, 1778, and one of April 11th, 1778, from the same.

*Ordered*, That they lie on the table.

*Philadelphia, Tuesday, September 22, 1778.*—A letter of this day from Mr. S. Deane was read, accompanied with two accounts of Monsieur le Grand.

*Whereas*, information hath been given to Congress, from which it is probable that William Carmichael, Esquire, is possessed of a knowledge of the conduct of Silas Deane, Esquire, late Commissioner at the

court of Versailles, touching the application of the public monies of these United States, and other matters relating to his public character ;

*Resolved*, That the said William Carmichael be directed to attend at the bar of the house this afternoon, to be examined in the premises.

*Whereas*, certain dissensions detrimental to the public service are said to have existed among the American Commissioners in Europe ;

*Resolved*, That the said William Carmichael be also examined touching the said dissensions and the conduct of the said Commissioners, as far as the same may have come to his knowledge.

*Ordered*, That the consideration of the letter of the Honourable Silas Deane, Esquire, be postponed until the examination of William Carmichael, Esquire, is taken, and that Mr. Deane be informed thereof.

*Three o'clock P. M.* On motion—*Resolved*, That Mr. Carmichael be examined upon oath ; that Mr. Secretary take down in writing the questions propounded, and the answers given to them.

*Journals of Congress.*

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#### TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Philadelphia, 22d September, 1778.

SIR,—In consequence of an order of Congress on the 8th of December, 1777, for me to embrace the first opportunity of returning to America, and “upon my arrival to repair with all possible despatch to Congress, that they might be well informed of the state of affairs in Europe in that critical juncture,” I left Paris the 1st of April last, having received the order on the 4th of March preceding, and arrived in Philadelphia, the seat of Congress, on the 13th of July following, ready at the pleasure of Congress to render such information as was in my power to give. In this situation I continued until the 15th of August, when I received the order of Congress to attend them on the 17th, on which day, and



on the 21st, I had the honor personally to inform Congress generally of my public transactions, under their authority, from the time of my departure from Philadelphia in March, 1776, until my return. In these audiences I particularly stated and explained the unsettled state in which the commercial transactions of the commissioners in Europe were at my departure, and that as well from their nature and extent, as that even at my departure from Paris, many large orders were not completed, and, of consequence, neither the accounts or vouchers delivered ; that the interval between my receiving my order of recall, and my departure in compliance with it, was so short as to render it impossible for me to arrange those affairs further than to be able to give a general state of them, which I then mentioned generally, and added that I was under the necessity of returning speedily to Europe, as well on account of those, as of other important affairs left by my sudden departure in an unsettled state. At my last audience I found and expected that I should be called upon to answer questions which might be put to me for the obtaining more clear and explicit information than what I had given of some particulars in my general narration, and I held myself in readiness to attend the pleasure of Congress for that purpose. In this situation my private affairs pressed my immediate departure from Philadelphia, and my public as well as private affairs in Europe no less urged my departure from America. On the 8th of September I took the liberty of reminding that honorable body that I was still waiting to receive their orders, if they desired my further attendance upon them ; and my affairs daily pressing, on the 11th of September I again reminded Congress of my waiting their pleasure, and took the liberty of mentioning the reasons that pressed me to be anxious for their immediate decision. As Congress have not thought proper to make any reply to my letters, nor to admit me to lay before them such further information as they may desire, and I am enabled to

give, and as from the many weighty affairs upon their hands, it is uncertain when I may be admitted ; and as my concerns will not permit my longer continuance in Philadelphia, I take the liberty of enclosing to your Excellency the account of the banker in whose hands all the public monies were deposited, of which I gave you some time since a general state for your private information, and which I obtained from the banker but a day or two before my departure from Paris, with the view of giving all the information in my power on every subject to Congress in which they were interested, and which account I expected in the course of my narration to have delivered personally to Congress.

As to any other subject on which further information may be desired, I shall be ready to give it whenever that honorable body shall call on me for it, during the short time my affairs will permit me to tarry in this city. I have, indeed, thought that some further information would be necessary ; I have daily expected to be called upon for it. On this consideration alone, I have, notwithstanding the pressing circumstances I have found myself in, waited with patience the orders of Congress. I shall be happy if such information, or any other service in my power, may be found agreeable and of use to that respectable body and the United States, to whom I have long since and ever shall be devoted. I have only further to request that honorable body to be assured that I shall ever retain a most grateful sense of the confidence which they have heretofore honored me with, and consider it as the most honorable and happy circumstance of my life that I have had the opportunity of rendering important services to my country, and that I am conscious of having done them to the utmost of my ability.

I have the honor to remain, with the utmost respect,  
&c.,

SILAS DEANE.

To his Excellency Henry Laurens.

*Diplomatic Correspondence, Amer. Rev. I., 124.*



## TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Philadelphia, 24<sup>th</sup> September, 1778.

SIR,—Being informed that letters from Mr. Izard, reflecting on my character and conduct whilst in the service of the public abroad, have been read in Congress, I have to ask that honorable body to grant me copies thereof, and that I may be permitted to wait on Congress, and to be heard in my vindication. I have that regard for Mr. Izard's opinion of my ability and disposition to transact public business which I ought to have, and am consequently easy on that subject; but facts asserted, which affect either, call for an explanation. Those, indeed, which respect myself personally, require none before Congress, nor will I trouble that honorable body with the making any; but those which regard my character and conduct as a public minister, and in so important a transaction as that of the late treaties of Paris, call on me, as well in justice to the public as to myself, for an explanation, which I am very happy in the having it in my power to give, as well as in the confidence I have that Congress will neither delay nor refuse doing this justice to a faithful and greatly injured servant of theirs.

I have the honor to be, with the most respectful attachment, your Excellency's most obedient and very humble Servant,

SILAS DEANE.

His Excellency Henry Laurens.

*Case of Silas Deane, Seventy-Six Society, p. 134.*

## PROCEEDINGS OF CONGRESS.

*Philadelphia, Friday, September 25, 1778.* A letter of the 24th from Mr. S. Deane was read, intimating that he is informed "That letters from Mr. Izard, reflecting on his character and conduct whilst in the

service of the public abroad, have been read in Congress," and requesting "to be furnished with copies thereof, and that he may be permitted to wait on Congress, and to be heard in his vindication."

*Ordered*, That, Mr. Deane be furnished with extracts of all such parts of Mr. Izard's letters, read in this house on the 19th, as relate to his public conduct.

*Philadelphia, Saturday, September 26, 1778.* — *Ordered*, That Mr. Carmichael be directed to attend at the bar of this house on Monday afternoon at three o'clock, to be examined touching the matter set forth in the resolution of the 22d.

*Ordered*, That Tuesday afternoon be assigned for hearing the Honourable Silas Deane, Esquire, and that he be notified to attend on that day at three o'clock.

*Monday, September 28, 1778.* Mr. Carmichael attending was called in and sworn, and sundry questions being asked and answers returned, he had leave to withdraw.

*Ordered*, That Mr. Carmichael attend at the bar of this house on Wednesday next at ten o'clock, to be farther examined.

*Tuesday, September 29, 1778.* *Ordered*, That the hearing of Mr. Deane be postponed 'till the examination of Mr. Carmichael is finished, and that Mr. Deane be informed thereof.

*Wednesday, September 30, 1778.* Mr. Carmichael attending, according to order, was called in, and the house proceeded in his examination.

*Ordered*, That Mr. Carmichael attend on Friday afternoon, to be further examined.

*Saturday, October 3, 1778.* The Committee for Foreign Affairs laid before Congress a letter of June 1st from the Honourable A. Lee, at Paris, which was read.

*Ordered*, That the Honourable Silas Deane, Esquire, be furnished with a copy of the said letter, so far as it relates to him.

*Monday, October 5, 1778.* Mr. Carmichael attend-



ing, according to order, was called in, and being further examined was ordered to withdraw.

*Journal of Congress.*

EXAMINATION OF MR. WILLIAM CARMICHAEL BEFORE  
CONGRESS.

Mr. Carmichael having, before taking the oath to give true answers, to speak the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, touching such questions as shall be asked, intimated that, as he might be embarrassed by the novelty of his situation, he wished to have the questions propounded to him in writing, and that his answers might be received in writing, that he might answer with that clearness and precision which he could wish.

*Ordered,* That Mr. Carmichael be informed that the questions will be propounded to him by the Chair, and that he is to answer *viva voce*, but that if he should find himself embarrassed, time will be given him in the House for recollection.

*Monday, September 28, 1778.*

Mr. Carmichael called in and sworn.

*Q.* At what time did you become acquainted with Mr. Deane?

*A.* In the month of July or August, 1776.

*Q.* Did Mr. Deane acquaint you with the nature of his mission to France, and at what time?

*A.* I was introduced to Mr. Deane by Mr. Rogers, of Maryland, who informed him I was zealously attached to the interest of America, and some time after Mr. Deane acquainted me with the nature of his mission.

*Q.* How long after being introduced to Mr. Deane were you acquainted with the nature of his mission?

*A.* I cannot recollect precisely.

*Q.* Did you assist Mr. Deane in his public business?

*A.* On knowing the nature of his mission, I offered

to assist Mr. Deane in any way in my power, while I was in France.

*Q.* Did Mr. Deane accept your offer?

*A.* He did.

*Q.* In what respect did you assist Mr. Deane?

*A.* In various respects; I assisted him in copying letters and in conversations.

*Q.* During the time you assisted Mr. Deane, were you acquainted with the receipts and expenditure of public moneys which passed through his hands?

*A.* I knew Mr. Deane received money and made purchases and contracts on the public account, but as I never wished to charge myself, or make myself responsible where I could have no merit, I did not pay sufficient attention to answer with precision.

*Q.* Do you know whether Mr. Deane misapplied the public money, or converted any of it to his own use?

*A.* My answer to the former question will show that I am not an adequate judge of the application of public money, and cannot answer with precision; at the same time would entreat that the House would not put an interpretation on my silence to the prejudice of any person whatever.

*Q.* From the knowledge you had of Mr. Deane's transactions, do you recollect any instance which you apprehend to be a misapplication of the public money?

*A.* I beg to know whether I am to answer from my knowledge, or suppositions, or opinions in my own mind.

*Ordered,* That Mr. Carmichael withdraw.

On the question whether the last be a proper question, the yeas and nays being required by Mr. Marchant—

|                    |                    |       |
|--------------------|--------------------|-------|
| New Hampshire..... | Mr. Bartlett. .... | ay—ay |
| Massachusetts..... | Mr. S. Adams. .... | ay    |
|                    | Gerry.....         | ay    |
|                    | Holten.....        | ay    |



|                |               |       |      |
|----------------|---------------|-------|------|
| Rhode Island   | Mr. Marchant  | ay—ay |      |
| Connecticut    | Mr. A. Adams  | ay—ay |      |
| New York       | Mr. Lewis     | ay    | } ay |
|                | G. Morris     | ay    |      |
| Pennsylvania   | Mr. R. Morris | ay    | } ay |
|                | Clingan       | ay    |      |
| Maryland       | Mr. Chase     | no    | } no |
|                | Plater        | no    |      |
|                | Stone         | no    |      |
|                | Forbes        | no    |      |
|                | Henry         | no    | } ay |
| Virginia       | Mr. Harvie    | no    |      |
|                | R. H. Lee     | ay    |      |
|                | M. Smith      | ay    |      |
|                | Griffin       | ay    | } no |
| North Carolina | Mr. Penn      | ay    |      |
|                | Harnett       | no    |      |
|                | Williams      | no    | } ay |
| South Carolina | Mr. Laurens   | ay    |      |
|                | Drayton       | ay    |      |
|                | Mathews       | no    | } ay |
| Georgia        | Mr. Walton    | ay    |      |
|                | Telfair       | ay    |      |
|                | Langworthy    | no    |      |

So it was resolved in the affirmative.

*Ordered,* That Mr. Carmichael attend at the bar on Wednesday next, at ten o'clock, to be further examined.

*Wednesday, September 30th, 1778.*

The last question proposed.

Although I think the House, by their determination, has put me into a very delicate, and to me, disagreeable situation, as I am desirous of giving the House every information, I am ready to answer the question, provided the question relates to apprehensions that may have arisen on what I conceived to be fact at the time.

*A.* I do.

*Q.* What were the instances?

*A.* The instance I allude to particularly, was the equipping a vessel of war, where I apprehend the public money had been appropriated to private uses.

*Q.* What vessel was it you allude to?

*A.* It was a vessel intended to be equipped in the Mediterranean, partly at the expense of the public, and partly of individuals.

*Q.* The name of the Captain and of the vessel?

*A.* The name of the Captain intended to be employed was Bell; as there were vessels bought which were afterwards obliged to be given up, there was no name given to any of them that I recollect.

*Q.* From what circumstances do you apprehend that there was a misapplication?

*A.* From this circumstance, that Mr. Deane having received money from M. Beaumarchais, which I conceived to be public money, did appropriate it to private uses, that is, in the purchase of those vessels as far as it regarded individuals.

*Q.* Why did you suppose that to be public money?

*A.* Because M. Beaumarchais having, as I apprehended, advanced before to the public to a large amount, I thought it was likewise on the public credit he advanced this sum.

*Q.* Are you clear there were more vessels than one bought in the Mediterranean?

*A.* There was but one intended to be bought, but the person employed bought two, as I understood.

*Q.* Who compelled the giving up of the vessels?

*A.* I understood the State of Genoa had interposed, and compelled the purchaser to restore them to the original proprietors.

*Q.* What were the names of the private persons that were to have been concerned with the public in those vessels?

*A.* I do not recollect all the private names.

*Q.* Do you recollect any?



*A.* I understood M. Beaumarchais was to have been concerned.

*Q.* Do you recollect any other?

*A.* I understood that Mr. Thomas Morris was to have been concerned for others, but who those others were I cannot positively say.

*Q.* Was Mr. Deane to have been concerned in his private capacity?

*A.* I do not know that he was.

*Q.* Did you understand or were you informed that Mr. Deane was to have been concerned in his private capacity?

*A.* I did not receive such information as to induce me to believe he was concerned.

*Q.* If you did not believe that Mr. Deane was concerned in his private capacity in those vessels, what did you mean when you said that you apprehended the public money was applied to private purposes in that instance?

*A.* I meant that I thought Mr. Deane had applied the public money to supply the deficiency of the money that others were to have advanced, but did not, towards the purpose of fitting out these vessels.

*Q.* On what grounds did you think that Mr. Deane meant to supply those deficiencies?

*A.* From conversations with divers persons, and other occurrences at that period.

The last question and answer being read, Mr. C. gave this explanation :

The idea I meant to convey to the House was this : I apprehended Mr. Deane had applied the money which I conceived to be public, to a private use. I judge that I had my information of Mr. Deane's receipt of the money from M. Beaumarchais, Mr. Deane himself, and others ; but that this information was merely of the fact that he received it, not whether it was public or private money which he had received and so applied.

*Q.* What persons?

*A.* I apprehend Mr. Deane and M. Beaumarchais

were two of the persons that informed me at that time.

*Q.* Were the other Commissioners or either of them acquainted with this transaction?

*A.* I apprehend Dr. Franklin was acquainted with the fitting out these vessels. I cannot charge my memory whether Mr. A. Lee was then at Paris or not.

*Q.* Are you sure that Mr. Deane and M. Beaumarchais were two of the persons with whom you had the conversations you before mentioned?

*A.* I apprehend from the nature of the transaction it must have been these persons, but I cannot be sure.

*Q.* By Mr. Adams. Whether from conversation with other persons, or from other occurrences, he had reason to believe Mr. Deane had advanced or was to have advanced moneys to make up these deficiencies?

*A.* I cannot at present absolutely charge my recollection with what I had reason to believe at that time—probably there might have been other occurrences which may have induced me to apprehend a misapplication of the money upon that occasion.

*Q.* By Mr. Duer. Do you know that the particular sum you allude to was charged by M. Beaumarchais to the United States?

*A.* Since my arrival in this country, by conversation with the agent of M. Beaumarchais, I have reason to believe the particular sum was charged by M. Beaumarchais to Mr. Deane's private account. M. Francis is now in the country and can answer the question.

*Q.* Did you know or believe that Mr. Deane applied the public money to the payment of such parts of those vessels as were to have been the property of the public?

*A.* I do not know; I believe that Mr. Deane would have applied the public money to that purpose, but cannot say that he did.



*Ordered* to withdraw—to have notice at what hour to attend on Friday afternoon.

*Monday, October 5, 1778.*

*Q.* Are you sure that the public had any share in those two vessels which were purchased in the Mediterranean?

*A.* I apprehended at the time that they had, and my reason for apprehending was, that the Captain had a Continental commission; I thought they were on the same footing as those fitted out at Dunkirk.

*Q.* Were you anywise concerned in equipping Capt. Conyngham from Dunkirk?

*A.* I was in no way concerned in the equipment. I was sent by Mr. Franklin and Mr. Deane to facilitate the departure of that vessel from the port.

*Q.* Was Captain Conyngham's vessel fitted out at Dunkirk more than once?

*A.* Captain Conyngham commanded two vessels from that port, one a lugger, the other a cutter.

*Q.* Were they fitted at the same time?

*A.* At different times.

*Q.* Were they or either of them public or private property?

*A.* I apprehended that each of them were part public and part private, but I do not certainly know.

*Q.* When you were sent to dispatch these vessels, did you consider yourself as acting for the public or for private persons?

*A.* Every service I performed for the Commissioners I considered as done for the public, and so I considered in this instance.

*Q.* What reason had you to consider these vessels as part private property?

*A.* From conversations I had at the time, particularly with Mr. Hodge, I had reason to apprehend he was concerned.

*Q.* Had you reason to suppose that Mr. Deane was concerned, or any of the Commissioners?

*A.* I did apprehend at that time that Mr. Deane was concerned in the first equipment.

*Q.* What reasons induced you to apprehend that Mr Deane was concerned in the first equipment?

*A.* I cannot recollect the reasons that induced that belief, but I know that I did at the time apprehend he was concerned.

*Q.* At what time was the first equipment made, what year, and what month?

*A.* At present I cannot precisely recollect. I think it was in the spring, 1777. The captain of the Harwich packet will nearly point out the time of the sailing.

*Q.* Do you know if any and what instructions were given to Captain Conyngham respecting that cruise?

*A.* I think there were instructions given, but I cannot be particular what those instructions were.

*Q.* By Mr. Lee. Do you know that the vessels, or either of them, were ordered to cruise on the coast of England?

*A.* I speak to the first vessel. I believe the object was to cruise for one of the Harwich packets. I myself gave directions.

*Q.* Was this equipment at Dunkirk made with or without the knowledge of the French ministry?

*A.* I cannot answer as to the knowledge of the French ministry.

*Q.* Did you overhear that the French ministry objected to it?

*A.* I know they gave proofs that it did not appear to be agreeable, for the Captain was imprisoned upon his return to Dunkirk.

*Q.* Did you hear that the French ministry objected previous to the sailing?

*A.* I do not know that they knew of the first vessel previous to her sailing, therefore they could not object to the equipment.



*Q.* Did you ever hear that the French ministry offered to pay the expense of equipping those vessels, or either of them, to prevent their sailing?

*A.* Of the first vessel I never heard that they did; of the second, I heard after she had sailed that they had given orders to pay the expense to prevent her sailing.

*Q.* Did you understand that much diligence was used to push these vessels, or either of them, out of Dunkirk, to prevent the effect of the measures the ministry had taken to stop their sailing?

*A.* With respect to the last, I believe all possible diligence was used to accelerate her departure, to prevent measures from being taken by the ministry to stop her sailing.

*Q.* Did you ever see or hear of a letter or letters written by the Count de Vergennes to M. Grand, or the Commissioners, complaining of this measure?

*A.* I have heard that there was such a letter, but I do not know whether to M. Grand or the Commissioners.

*Q.* Do you know whether the Commissioners had received any order from Congress or the Secret Committee relative to the fitting out of these two vessels?

*A.* I do not know whether they had received orders relative to the fitting out of these two vessels.

*Q.* Did you ever hear that they had?

*A.* I never heard that they had received orders to fit out these two vessels particularly. I heard that they had general orders to fit out vessels.

*Q.* Do you mean vessels of force to cruise against the enemy?

*A.* I do, because they received Continental commissions for the Captains.















